TRILBY

G. DU MAURIER

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TRILBY

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BY

GEORGE DU MAURIER

AUTHOR OF 'PETER IBBETSON'

'Hélas! je sais un chant d'amour
Triste et gai tour à tour!'

IN THREE VOLS.

VOL. III

LONDON

OSGOOD, McILVAINE & CO.

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TRILBY

PART SEVENTH

'The moon made thy lips pale, beloved,
The wind made thy bosom chill;
The night did shed
On thy dear head
Its frozen dew, and thou didst lie
Where the bitter breath of the naked sky
Might visit thee at will.[1]

NEXT morning our three friends lay late abed, and breakfasted in their rooms.

They had all three passed 'white nights' —even the Laird, who had tossed about and pressed a sleepless pillow till dawn, so excited had he been by the wonder of Trilby's reincarnation, so perplexed by his

own doubts as to whether it was really Trilby or not.

And certain haunting tones of her voice, that voice so cruelly sweet (which clove the stillness with a clang so utterly new, so strangely heart-piercing and seductive, that the desire to hear it once more became nostalgic—almost an ache!), certain bits and bars and phrases of the music she had sung, unspeakable felicities and facilities of execution; sudden exotic warmths, fragrances, tendernesses, graces, depths, and breadths; quick changes from grave to gay, from rough to smooth, from great metallic brazen clangours to soft golden suavities; all the varied modes of sound we try so vainly to borrow from vocal nature by means of wind and reed and string—all this new 'Trilbyness' kept echoing in his brain all night (for he was of a nature deeply musical), and sleep had been impossible to him.

> 'As when we dwell upon a word we know,
> Repeating, till the word we know so well
> Becomes a wonder, and we know not why,'

so dwelt the Laird upon the poor old tune 'Ben Bolt,' which kept singing itself over and over again in his tired consciousness, and maddened him with novel, strange, unhackneyed, unsuspected beauties such as he had never dreamed of in any earthly music.

It had become a wonder, and he knew not why!

They spent what was left of the morning at the Louvre, and tried to interest themselves in the 'Marriage of Cana,' and the 'Woman at the Well,' and Vandyck's man with the glove, and the little Princess of Velasquez, and Lisa Gioconda's smile: it was of no use trying. There was no sight worth looking at in all Paris but Trilby in her golden raiment; no other princess in the world; no smile but hers, when through her

parted lips came bubbling Chopin's Impromptu. They had not long to stay in Paris, and they must drink of that bubbling fountain once more—*coûte que coûte!* They went to the Salle des Bashibazoucks, and found that all seats all over the house had been taken for days and weeks; and the 'queue' at the door had already begun! and they had to give up all hopes of slaking this particular thirst.

Then they went and lunched perfunctorily, and talked desultorily over lunch, and read criticisms of La Svengali's *début* in the morning papers—a chorus of journalistic acclamation gone mad, a frenzied eulogy in every key—but nothing was good enough for them! Brand-new words were wanted—another language!

Then they wanted a long walk, and could think of nowhere to go in all Paris—that immense Paris, where they had promised

themselves to see so much that the week they were to spend there had seemed too short!

Looking in a paper, they saw it announced that the band of the Imperial Guides would play that afternoon in the Pré Catelan, Bois de Boulogne, and thought they might as well walk there as anywhere else, and walk back again in time to dine with the Passefils—a prandial function which did not promise to be very amusing; but still it was something to kill the evening with, since they couldn't go and hear Trilby again.

Outside the Pré Catelan they found a crowd of cabs and carriages, saddle-horses and grooms. One might have thought one's self in the height of the Paris season. They went in, and strolled about here and there, and listened to the band, which was famous (it has performed in London at the Crystal

Palace), and they looked about and studied life, or tried to.

Suddenly they saw, sitting with three ladies (one of whom, the eldest, was in black), a very smart young officer, a Guide, all red and green and gold, and recognised their old friend Zouzou. They bowed, and he knew them at once, and jumped up and came to them and greeted them warmly, especially his old friend Taffy, whom he took to his mother—the lady in black—and introduced to the other ladies, the younger of whom was so lamentably, so pathetically plain that it would be brutal to attempt the cheap and easy task of describing her. It was Miss Lavinia Hunks, the famous American millionairess, and her mother. Then the good Zouzou came back and talked to the Laird and Little Billee.

Zouzou, in some subtle and indescribable way, had become very ducal indeed.

He looked extremely distinguished, for one thing, in his beautiful Guides' uniform, and was most gracefully and winningly polite. He inquired warmly after Mrs. and Miss Bagot, and begged Little Billee would recall him to their amiable remembrance when he saw them again. He expressed most sympathetically his delight to see Little Billee looking so strong and so well (Little Billee looked like a pallid little washed-out ghost, after his white night).

They talked of Dodor. He said how attached he was to Dodor, and always should be; but Dodor, it seemed, had made a great mistake in leaving the army and going into a retail business (*petit commerce*). He had done for himself—*dégringolé!* He should have stuck to the *dragons*—with a little patience and good conduct he would have 'won his epaulet'—and then one might have arranged for him a good little marriage—*un*

parti convenable—for he was 'très joli garçon, Dodor! bonne tournure—et très gentiment né! C'est très ancien, les Rigolot—dans le Poitou, je crois—Lafarce, et tout ça; tout à fait bien!'

It was difficult to realise that this polished and discreet and somewhat patronising young man of the world was the jolly dog who had gone after Little Billee's hat on all fours in the Rue Vieille des Trois Mauvais Ladres and brought it back in his mouth—the Caryhatide!

Little Billee little knew that Monsieur le Duc de la Rochemartel-Boisségur had quite recently delighted a very small and select and most august imperial supper-party at Compiègne with this very story, not blinking a single detail of his own share in it—and had given a most touching and sympathetic description of 'le joli petit peintre anglais qui s'appelait Litrebili, et ne pouvait pas se

tenir sur ses jambes—et qui pleurait d'amour fraternel dans les bras de mon copain Dodor!'

'Ah! Monsieur Gontran, ce que je donnerais pour avoir vu ça!' had said the greatest lady in France; 'un de mes zouaves —à quatre pattes—dans la rue—un chapeau dans la bouche—oh—c'est impayable!'

Zouzou kept these blackguard bohemian reminiscences for the imperial circle alone —to which it was suspected that he was secretly rallying himself. Among all outsiders — especially within the narrow precincts of the cream of the noble Faubourg (which remained aloof from the Tuileries)— he was a very proper and gentlemanlike person indeed, as his brother had been— and, in his mother's fond belief, 'très bien pensant, très bien vu, à Frohsdorf et à Rome.'

On lui aurait donné le bon Dieu sans con-

fession—as Madame Vinard had said of Little Billee—they would have shriven him at sight, and admitted him to the holy communion on trust!

He did not present Little Billee and the Laird to his mother, nor to Mrs. and Miss Hunks; that honour was reserved for 'the Man of Blood' alone; nor did he ask where they were staying, nor invite them to call on him. But in parting he expressed the immense pleasure it had given him to meet them again, and the hope he had of some day shaking their hands in London.

As the friends walked back to Paris together, it transpired that 'the Man of Blood' had been invited by Madame Duchesse Mère (Maman Duchesse, as Zouzou called her) to dine with her next day, and meet the Hunkses at a furnished apartment she had taken in the Place Vendôme; for they had let (to the Hunkses) the Hôtel de la Roche-

martel in the Rue de Lille; they had also been obliged to let their place in the country, le château de Boisségur (to Monsieur Despoires, or 'des Poires,' as he chose to spell himself on his visiting cards—the famous soap manufacturer—'Un très brave homme, à ce qu'on dit!' and whose only son, by the way, soon after married Mademoiselle Jeanne-Adélaïde d'Amaury-Brissac de Roncesvaulx de Boisségur de la Rochemartel).

'Il ne fait pas gras chez nous à présent—je vous assure!' Madame Duchesse Mère had pathetically said to Taffy—but had given him to understand that things would be very much better for her son in the event of his marriage with Miss Hunks.

'Good heavens!' said Little Billee, on hearing this; 'that grotesque little bogy in blue? Why, she's deformed—she squints—she's a dwarf, and looks like an idiot! Millions or no millions, the man who marries

her is a felon! As long as there are stones to break and a road to break them on, the able-bodied man who marries a woman like that for anything but pity and kindness—and even then—dishonours himself, insults his ancestry, and inflicts on his descendants a wrong that nothing will ever redeem—he nips them in the bud—he blasts them for ever! He ought to be cut by his fellow-men—sent to Coventry—to jail—to penal servitude for life! He ought to have a separate hell to himself when he dies—he ought to——'

'Shut up, you little blaspheming ruffian!' said the Laird. 'Where do *you* expect to go to, yourself, with such frightful sentiments? And what would become of your beautiful old twelfth-century dukedoms, with a hundred yards of back frontage opposite the Louvre, on a beautiful historic river, and a dozen beautiful historic names, and no

money—if *you* had your way?' and the Laird wunk his historic wink.

'Twelfth-century dukedoms be damned!' said Taffy, *au grand sérieux*, as usual. 'Little Billee's quite right, and Zouzou makes me sick! Besides, what does she marry *him* for—not for his beauty either, I guess! She's his fellow-criminal, his deliberate accomplice, *particeps delicti*, accessory before the act and after! She has no right to marry at all! tar and feathers and a rail for both of them—and for Maman Duchesse too—and I suppose that's why I refused her invitation to dinner! and now let's go and dine with Dodor— . . . anyhow Dodor's young woman doesn't marry him for a dukedom—or even his 'de'—*mais bien pour ses beaux yeux!* and if the Rigolots of the future turn out less nice to look at than their sire, and not quite so amusing, they will probably be a great improvement

on him in many other ways. There's room enough—and to spare!'

''Ear! 'ear!' said Little Billee (who always grew flippant when Taffy got on his high horse). 'Your 'ealth and song, sir—them's my sentiments to a T! What shall we 'ave the pleasure of drinkin', after that wery nice 'armony?'

After which they walked on in silence, each, no doubt, musing on the general contrariness of things, and imagining what splendid little Wynnes, or Bagots, or M'Allisters might have been ushered into a decadent world for its regeneration if fate had so willed it that a certain magnificent and singularly gifted grisette, etc. etc. etc. . . .

Mrs. and Miss Hunks passed them as they walked along, in a beautiful blue barouche with C-springs—*un 'huit-ressorts'*; Maman Duchesse passed them in a hired fly; Zouzou passed them on horseback;

'tout Paris' passed them; but they were none the wiser, and agreed that the show was not a patch on that in Hyde Park during the London season.

When they reached the Place de la Concorde it was that lovely hour of a fine autumn day in beautiful bright cities when all the lamps are lit in the shops and streets and under the trees, and it is still daylight—a quickly fleeting joy; and as a special treat on this particular occasion the sun set, and up rose the yellow moon over eastern Paris, and floated above the chimney-pots of the Tuileries.

They stopped to gaze at the homeward procession of cabs and carriages, as they used to do in the old times. Tout Paris was still passing; tout Paris is very long.

They stood among a little crowd of sight-seers like themselves, Little Billee right in front—in the road.

Presently a magnificent open carriage came by—more magnificent than even the Hunkses', with liveries and harness quite vulgarly resplendent—almost Napoleonic.

Lolling back in it lay Monsieur et Madame Svengali — he with his broad-brimmed felt sombrero over his long black curls, wrapped in costly furs, smoking his big cigar of the Havana.

By his side La Svengali—also in sables—with a large black velvet hat on, her light brown hair done up in a huge knot on the nape of her neck. She was rouged and pearl-powdered, and her eyes were blackened beneath, and thus made to look twice their size; but in spite of all such disfigurements she was a most splendid vision, and caused quite a little sensation in the crowd as she came slowly by.

Little Billee's heart was in his mouth. He caught Svengali's eye, and saw him

speak to her. She turned her head and looked at him standing there—they both did. Little Billee bowed. She stared at him with a cold stare of disdain, and cut him dead—so did Svengali. And as they passed he heard them both snigger—she with a little high-pitched flippant snigger worthy of a London barmaid.

Little Billee was utterly crushed, and everything seemed turning round.

The Laird and Taffy had seen it all without losing a detail. The Svengalis had not even looked their way. The Laird said:

'It's not Trilby—I swear! She could *never* have done that—it's not *in* her! and it's another face altogether—I'm sure of it!'

Taffy was also staggered and in doubt. They caught hold of Little Billee, each by an arm, and walked him off to the boulevards. He was quite demoralised, and wanted not to dine at Passefil's. He wanted to go

straight home at once. He longed for his mother as he used to long for her when he was in trouble as a small boy and she was away from home—longed for her desperately—to hug her and hold her and fondle her, and be fondled, for his own sake and hers; all his old love for her had come back in full—with what arrears! all his old love for his sister, for his old home.

When they went back to the hotel to dress (for Dodor had begged them to put on their best evening war-paint, so as to impress his future mother-in-law), Little Billee became fractious and intractable. And it was only on Taffy's promising that he would go all the way to Devonshire with him on the morrow, and stay with him there, that he could be got to dress and dine.

The huge Taffy lived entirely by his affections, and he hadn't many to live by—the Laird, Trilby, and Little Billee.

Trilby was unattainable, the Laird was quite strong and independent enough to get on by himself, and Taffy had concentrated all his faculties of protection and affection on Little Billee, and was equal to any burden or responsibility all this instinctive young fathering might involve.

In the first place, Little Billee had always been able to do quite easily, and better than any one else in the world, the very things Taffy most longed to do himself and couldn't, and this inspired the good Taffy with a chronic reverence and wonder he could not have expressed in words.

Then Little Billee was physically small and weak, and incapable of self-control. Then he was generous, amiable, affectionate, transparent as crystal, without an atom of either egotism or conceit; and had a gift of amusing you and interesting you by his talk (and its complete sincerity) that never

palled; and even his silence was charming—one felt so sure of him—so there was hardly any sacrifice, little or big, that big Taffy was not ready and glad to make for Little Billee. On the other hand, there lay deep down under Taffy's surface irascibility and earnestness about trifles (and beneath his harmless vanity of the strong man), a long-suffering patience, a real humility, a robustness of judgment, a sincerity and all-roundness, a completeness of sympathy, that made him very good to trust and safe to lean upon. Then his powerful, impressive aspect, his great stature, the gladiator-like poise of his small round head on his big neck and shoulders, his huge deltoids and deep chest and slender loins, his clean-cut ankles and wrists, all the long and bold and highly-finished athletic shapes of him, that easy grace of strength that made all his movements a pleasure to watch, and any garment look

well when he wore it—all this was a perpetual feast to the quick, prehensile, æsthetic eye. And then he had such a solemn, earnest, lovable way of bending pokers round his neck, and breaking them on his arm, and jumping his own height (or near it), and lifting up arm-chairs by one leg with one hand, and what not else!

So that there was hardly any sacrifice, little or big, that Little Billee would not accept from big Taffy as a mere matter of course—a fitting and proper tribute rendered by bodily strength to genius.

Par nobile fratrum—well met and well mated for fast and long-enduring friendship.

. . . . .

The family banquet at Monsieur Passefil's would have been dull but for the irrepressible Dodor, and still more for the Laird of Cockpen, who rose to the occasion, and surpassed himself in geniality, drollery, and

eccentricity of French grammar and accent. Monsieur Passefil was also a droll in his way, and had the quickly familiar, jocose facetiousness that seems to belong to the successful middle-aged bourgeois all over the world, when he's not pompous instead (he can even be both sometimes).

Madame Passefil was not jocose. She was much impressed by the aristocratic splendour of Taffy, the romantic melancholy and refinement of Little Billee, and their quiet and dignified politeness. She always spoke of Dodor as Monsieur de Lafarce, though the rest of the family (and one or two friends who had been invited) always called him Monsieur Théodore, and he was officially known as Monsieur Rigolot.

Whenever Madame Passefil addressed him or spoke of him in this aristocratic manner (which happened very often), Dodor would wink at his friends, with his tongue in

his cheek. It seemed to amuse him beyond measure.

Mademoiselle Ernestine was evidently too much in love to say anything, and seldom took her eyes off Monsieur Théodore, whom she had never seen in evening dress before. It must be owned that he looked very nice—more ducal than even Zouzou—and to be Madame de Lafarce *en perspective*, and the future owner of such a brilliant husband as Dodor, was enough to turn a stronger little bourgeois head than Mademoiselle Ernestine's.

She was not beautiful, but healthy, well grown, well brought up, and presumably of a sweet, kind, and amiable disposition—an *ingénue* fresh from her convent—innocent as a child, no doubt; and it was felt that Dodor had done better for himself (and for his race) than Monsieur le Duc. Little Dodors need have no fear.

After dinner the ladies and gentlemen left the dining-room together, and sat in a pretty salon overlooking the boulevard, where cigarettes were allowed, and there was music. Mademoiselle Ernestine laboriously played 'Les Cloches du Monastère' (by Monsieur Lefébure-Wély, if I'm not mistaken). It's the most bourgeois piece of music I know.

Then Dodor, with his sweet high voice, so strangely pathetic and true, sang goody-goody little French songs of innocence (of which he seemed to have an endless *répertoire*) to his future wife's conscientious accompaniment—to the immense delight, also, of all his future family, who were almost in tears—and to the great amusement of the Laird, at whom he winked in the most pathetic parts, putting his forefinger to the side of his nose, like Noah Claypole in *Oliver Twist.*

The wonder of the hour, La Svengali, was

discussed, of course; it was unavoidable. But our friends did not think it necessary to reveal that she was 'la grande Trilby.' That would soon transpire by itself.

And, indeed, before the month was a week older the papers were full of nothing else.

Madame Svengali—'la grande Trilby'—was the only daughter of the honourable and reverend Sir Lord O'Ferrall.

She had run away from the primeval forests and lonely marshes of le Dublin, to lead a free-and-easy life among the artists of the Quartier Latin of Paris—*une vie de bohème!*

She was the Venus Anadyomene from top to toe.

She was *blanche comme neige, avec un volcan dans le cœur.*

Casts of her alabaster feet could be had at Brucciani's, in the Rue de la Souricière St. Denis. (He made a fortune.)

Monsieur Ingres had painted her left foot on the wall of a studio in the Place St. Anatole des Arts; and an eccentric Scotch milord (le Comte de Pencock) had bought the house containing the flat containing the studio containing the wall on which it was painted, had had the house pulled down, and the wall framed and glazed and sent to his castle of Édimbourg.

(This, unfortunately, was in excess of the truth. It was found impossible to execute the Laird's wish, on account of the material the wall was made of. So the Lord Count of Pencock — such was Madame Vinard's version of Sandy's nickname — had to forgo his purchase.)

Next morning our friends were in readiness to leave Paris; even the Laird had had enough of it, and longed to get back to his work again — a 'Hari-kari in Yokohama.'

(He had never been to Japan; but no more had any one else in those early days.)

They had just finished breakfast, and were sitting in the courtyard of the hotel, which was crowded, as usual.

Little Billee went into the hotel post-office to despatch a note to his mother. Sitting sideways there at a small table and reading letters was Svengali—of all people in the world. But for these two and a couple of clerks the room was empty.

Svengali looked up; they were quite close together.

Little Billee, in his nervousness, began to shake, and half put out his hand, and drew it back again, seeing the look of hate on Svengali's face.

Svengali jumped up, put his letters together, and passing by Little Billee on his way to the door, called him 'verfluchter Schweinhund,' and deliberately spat in his face.

Little Billee was paralysed for a second or two; then he ran after Svengali, and caught him just at the top of the marble stairs, and kicked him, and knocked off his hat, and made him drop all his letters. Svengali turned round and struck him over the mouth and made it bleed, and Little Billee hit out like a fury, but with no effect: he couldn't reach high enough, for Svengali was well over six feet.

There was a crowd round them in a minute, including the beautiful old man in the court suit and gold chain, who called out:

'Vite! vite! un commissaire de police!'—a cry that was echoed all over the place.

Taffy saw the row, and shouted, 'Bravo, little 'un!' and jumping up from his table, jostled his way through the crowd; and Little Billee, bleeding and gasping and perspiring and stammering, said:

'He spat in my face, Taffy—damn him! I'd never even spoken to him—not a word, I swear!'

Svengali had not reckoned on Taffy's being there; he recognised him at once, and turned white.

Taffy, who had dogskin gloves on, put out his right hand, and deftly seized Svengali's nose between his fore and middle fingers and nearly pulled it off, and swung his head two or three times backward and forward by it, and then from side to side, Svengali holding on to his wrist; and then, letting him go, gave him a sounding open-handed smack on his right cheek—and a smack on the face from Taffy (even in play) was no joke, I'm told; it made one smell brimstone, and see and hear things that didn't exist.

Svengali gasped worse than Little Billee, and couldn't speak for a while. Then he said:

'Lâche—grand lâche! che fous enferrai mes témoins!'

'At your orders!' said Taffy, in beautiful French, and drew out his card-case, and gave him his card in quite the orthodox French manner, adding: 'I shall be here till to-morrow at twelve—but that is my London address, in case I don't hear from you before I leave. I'm sorry, but you really mustn't spit, you know—it's not done. I will come to you whenever you send for me—even if I have to come from the end of the world.'

'Très bien! très bien!' said a military-looking old gentleman close by, who gave Taffy *his* card, in case he might be of any service—and who seemed quite delighted at the row—and indeed it was really pleasant to note with what a smooth, flowing, rhythmical spontaneity the good Taffy could always improvise these swift little acts of

summary retributive justice: no hurry or scurry or flurry whatever—not an inharmonious gesture, not an infelicitous line—the very poetry of violence, and almost its only excuse!

Whatever it was worth, this was Taffy's special gift, and it never failed him at a pinch.

When the commissaire de police arrived, all was over. Svengali had gone away in a cab, and Taffy put himself at the disposition of the commissaire.

They went into the post-office and discussed it all with the old military gentleman, and the majordome in velvet, and the two clerks who had seen the original insult. And all that was required of Taffy and his friends for the present was 'their names, prenames, titles, qualities, age, address, nationality, occupation,' etc.

'C'est une affaire qui s'arrangera autrement, et autre part!' had said the military

gentleman—monsieur le général Comte de la Tour-aux-Loups.

So it blew over quite simply; and all that day a fierce unholy joy burned in Taffy's choleric blue eye.

Not, indeed, that he had any wish to injure Trilby's husband, or meant to do him any grievous bodily harm, whatever happened. But he was glad to have given Svengali a lesson in manners.

That Svengali should injure *him* never entered into his calculations for a moment. Besides, he didn't believe Svengali would show fight; and in this he was not mistaken.

But he had, for hours, the feel of that long, thick, shapely Hebrew nose being kneaded between his gloved knuckles, and a pleasing sense of the effectiveness of the tweak he had given it. So he went about chewing the cud of that heavenly remembrance all day, till reflection brought remorse,

and he felt sorry; for he was really the mildest-mannered man that ever broke a head!

Only the sight of Little Billee's blood (which had been made to flow by such an unequal antagonist) had roused the old Adam.

No message came from Svengali to ask for the names and addresses of Taffy's seconds; so Dodor and Zouzou (not to mention Mister the general Count of the Tooraloorals, as the Laird called him) were left undisturbed; and our three musketeers went back to London clean of blood, whole of limb, and heartily sick of Paris.

Little Billee stayed with his mother and sister in Devonshire till Christmas, Taffy staying at the village inn.

It was Taffy who told Mrs. Bagot about La Svengali's all but certain identity with Trilby, after Little Billee had gone to

bed, tired and worn out, the night of their arrival.

'Good heavens!' said poor Mrs. Bagot. 'Why, that's the new singing woman who's coming over here! There's an article about her in to-day's *Times*. It says she's a wonder, and that there's no one like her! Surely, that can't be the Miss O'Ferrall I saw in Paris!'

'It seems impossible—but I'm almost certain it is—and Willy has no doubts in the matter. On the other hand, M'Allister declares it isn't.'

'Oh, what trouble! So *that's* why poor Willy looks so ill and miserable! It's all come back again. Could she sing at all then, when you knew her in Paris?'

'Not a note—her attempts at singing were quite grotesque.'

'Is she still very beautiful?'

'Oh, yes; there's no doubt about that; more than ever!'

'And her singing—is that so very wonderful? I remember that she had a beautiful voice in speaking.'

'Wonderful? Ah, yes; I never heard or dreamed the like of it. Grisi, Alboni, Patti—not one of them to be mentioned in the same breath!'

'Good heavens! Why, she must be simply irresistible! I wonder you're not in love with her yourself. How dreadful these sirens are, wrecking the peace of families!'

'You mustn't forget that she gave way at once at a word from you, Mrs. Bagot; and she was very fond of Willy. She wasn't a siren then.'

'Oh yes—oh yes! that's true—she behaved very well—she did her duty—I can't deny that! You must try and forgive me, Mr. Wynne—although I can't forgive *her!*—that dreadful illness of poor Willy's—that bitter time in Paris——'

And Mrs. Bagot began to cry, and Taffy forgave. 'Oh, Mr. Wynne, let us still hope that there's some mistake—that it's only somebody like her! Why, she's coming to sing in London after Christmas! My poor boy's infatuation will only increase. What *shall* I do?'

'Well—she's another man's wife, you see. So Willy's infatuation is bound to burn itself out as soon as he fully recognises that important fact. Besides, she cut him dead in the Champs Élysées—and her husband and Willy had a row next day at the hotel, and cuffed and kicked each other—that's rather a bar to any future intimacy, I think.'

'Oh, Mr. Wynne! my son cuffing and kicking a man whose wife he's in love with! Good heavens!'

'Oh, it was all right—the man had grossly insulted him; and Willy behaved like a brick,

and got the best of it in the end, and nothing came of it. I saw it all.'

'Oh, Mr. Wynne—and you didn't interfere?'

'Oh yes, I interfered—everybody interfered! It was all right, I assure you. No bones were broken on either side, and there was no nonsense about calling out, or swords or pistols, and all that.'

'Thank Heaven!'

In a week or two Little Billee grew more like himself again, and painted endless studies of rocks and cliffs and sea—and Taffy painted with him, and was very content. The vicar and Little Billee patched up their feud. The vicar also took an immense fancy to Taffy, whose cousin, Sir Oscar Wynne, he had known at college, and lost no opportunity of being hospitable and civil to him. And his daughter was away in Algiers.

And all 'the nobility and gentry' of the

neighbourhood, including 'the poor dear marquis' (one of whose sons was in Taffy's old regiment), were civil and hospitable also to the two painters—and Taffy got as much sport as he wanted, and became immensely popular. And they had, on the whole, a very good time till Christmas, and a very pleasant Christmas, if not an exuberantly merry one.

After Christmas Little Billee insisted on going back to London—to paint a picture for the Royal Academy; and Taffy went with him; and there was dulness in the house of Bagot—and many misgivings in the maternal heart of its mistress.

And people of all kinds, high and low, from the family at the Court to the fishermen on the little pier and their wives and children, missed the two genial painters, who were the friends of everybody, and made such beautiful sketches of their beautiful coast.

. . . . .

La Svengali has arrived in London. Her name is in every mouth. Her photograph is in the shop-windows. She is to sing at J——'s monster concerts next week. She was to have sung sooner, but it seems some hitch has occurred—a quarrel between Monsieur Svengali and his first violin, who is a very important person.

A crowd of people as usual, only bigger, is assembled in front of the windows of the Stereoscopic Company in Regent Street, gazing at presentments of Madame Svengali in all sizes and costumes. She is very beautiful—there is no doubt of that; and the expression of her face is sweet and kind and sad, and of such a distinction that one feels an imperial crown would become her even better than her modest little coronet of golden stars. One of the photographs represents her in classical dress, with her left foot on a little stool, in something of the attitude of

the Venus of Milo, except that her hands are clasped behind her back; and the foot is bare but for a Greek sandal, and so smooth and delicate and charming, and with so rhythmical a set and curl of the five slender toes (the big one slightly tip-tilted and well apart from its longer and slighter and more aquiline neighbour), that this presentment of her sells quicker than all the rest.

And a little man who, with two bigger men, has just forced his way in front says to one of his friends: 'Look, Sandy, look—*the foot! Now* have you got any doubts?'

'Oh yes—those are Trilby's toes, sure enough!' says Sandy. And they all go in and purchase largely.

As far as I have been able to discover, the row between Svengali and his first violin had occurred at a rehearsal in Drury Lane Theatre.

Svengali, it seems, had never been quite the same since the 15th of October previous, and that was the day he had got his face slapped and his nose tweaked by Taffy in Paris. He had become short-tempered and irritable, especially with his wife (if she *was* his wife). Svengali, it seems, had reasons for passionately hating Little Billee.

He had not seen him for five years—not since the Christmas festivity in the Place St. Anatole, when they had sparred together after supper, and Svengali's nose had got in the way on this occasion, and had been made to bleed; but that was not why he hated Little Billee.

When he caught sight of him standing on the curb in the Place de la Concorde and watching the procession of 'tout Paris,' he knew him directly, and all his hate flared up; he cut him dead, and made his wife do the same.

Next morning he saw him again in the hotel post office, looking small and weak and flurried, and apparently alone; and being an Oriental Israelite Hebrew Jew, he had not been able to resist the temptation of spitting in his face, since he must not throttle him to death.

The minute he had done this he had regretted the folly of it. Little Billee had run after him, and kicked and struck him, and he had returned the blow and drawn blood; and then, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, had come upon the scene that apparition so loathed and dreaded of old—the pig-headed Yorkshireman — the huge British philistine, the irresponsible bull, the junker, the ex-Crimean, Front-de-Bœuf, who had always reminded him of the brutal and contemptuous sword-clanking, spur-jingling aristocrats of his own country—ruffians that treated Jews like dogs. Callous as he was

to the woes of others, the self-indulgent and highly-strung musician was extra sensitive about himself—a very bundle of nerves—and especially sensitive to pain and rough usage, and by no means physically brave. The stern, choleric, invincible blue eye of the hated northern Gentile had cowed him at once. And that violent tweaking of his nose, that heavy open-handed blow on his face, had so shaken and demoralised him that he had never recovered from it.

He was thinking about it always—night and day—and constantly dreaming at night that he was being tweaked and slapped over again by a colossal nightmare Taffy, and waking up in agonies of terror, rage, and shame. All healthy sleep had forsaken him.

Moreover, he was much older than he looked — nearly fifty — and far from sound. His life had been a long, hard struggle.

He had for his wife, slave, and pupil a fierce, jealous kind of affection that was a source of endless torment to him; for indelibly graven in her heart, which he wished to occupy alone, was the never-fading image of the little English painter, and of this she made no secret.

Gecko no longer cared for the master. All Gecko's doglike devotion was concentrated on the slave and pupil, whom he worshipped with a fierce but pure and unselfish passion. The only living soul that Svengali could trust was the old Jewess who lived with them—his relative—but even she had come to love the pupil as much as the master.

On the occasion of this rehearsal at Drury Lane he (Svengali) was conducting and Madame Svengali was singing. He interrupted her several times, angrily and most unjustly, and told her she was singing

out of tune, 'like a verfluchter tomcat,' which was quite untrue. She was singing beautifully, 'Home, Sweet Home.'

Finally he struck her two or three smart blows on her knuckles with his little bâton, and she fell on her knees, weeping and crying out:

'Oh! oh! Svengali! ne me battez pas, mon ami—je fais tout ce que je peux!'

On which little Gecko had suddenly jumped up and struck Svengali on the neck near the collar-bone, and then it was seen that he had a little bloody knife in his hand, and blood flowed from Svengali's neck, and at the sight of it Svengali had fainted; and Madame Svengali had taken his head on her lap, looking dazed and stupefied, as in a waking dream.

Gecko had been disarmed, but as Svengali recovered from his faint and was taken home, the police had not been

sent for, and the affair was hushed up, and a public scandal avoided. But La Svengali's first appearance, to Monsieur J——'s despair, had to be put off for a week. For Svengali would not allow her to sing without him; nor, indeed, would he be parted from her for a minute, or trust her out of his sight.

The wound was a slight one. The doctor who attended Svengali described the wife as being quite imbecile, no doubt from grief and anxiety. But she never left her husband's bedside for a moment, and had the obedience and devotion of a dog.

When the night came round for the postponed *début*, Svengali was allowed by the doctor to go to the theatre, but he was absolutely forbidden to conduct. His grief and anxiety at this were uncontrollable; he raved like a madman; and Monsieur J—— was almost as bad.

Monsieur J—— had been conducting the Svengali band at rehearsals during the week, in the absence of its master—an easy task. It had been so thoroughly drilled and knew its business so well that it could almost conduct itself, and it had played all the music it had to play (much of which consisted of accompaniments to La Svengali's songs) many times before. Her *répertoire* was immense, and Svengali had written these orchestral scores with great care and felicity.

On the famous night it was arranged that Svengali should sit in a box alone, exactly opposite his wife's place on the platform, where she could see him well; and a code of simple signals was arranged between him and Monsieur J—— and the band, so that virtually he might conduct, himself, from his box, should any hesitation or hitch occur. This arrangement was rehearsed the day

before (a Sunday) and had turned out quite successfully, and La Svengali had sung in perfection in the empty theatre.

When Monday evening arrived everything seemed to be going smoothly; the house was soon crammed to suffocation, all but the middle box on the grand tier. It was not a promenade concert, and the pit was turned into guinea stalls (the promenade concerts were to begin a week later).

Right in the middle of these stalls sat the Laird and Taffy and Little Billee.

The band came in by degrees and tuned their instruments.

Eyes were constantly being turned to the empty box, and people wondered what royal personages would appear.

Monsieur J—— took his place amid immense applause, and bowed in his inimitable way, looking often at the empty box.

Then he tapped and waved his bâton, and the band played its Hungarian dance music with immense success; when this was over there was a pause, and soon some signs of impatience from the gallery. Monsieur J—— had disappeared.

Taffy stood up, his back to the orchestra, looking round.

Some one came into the empty box, and stood for a moment in front, gazing at the house. A tall man, deathly pale, with long black hair and a beard.

It was Svengali.

He caught sight of Taffy and met his eyes, and Taffy said: 'Good God! Look! look!'

Then Little Billee and the Laird got up and looked.

And Svengali for a moment glared at them. And the expression of his face was so terrible with wonder, rage, and fear that

they were quite appalled—and then he sat down, still glaring at Taffy, the whites of his eyes showing at the top, and his teeth bared in a spasmodic grin of hate.

Then thunders of applause filled the house, and turning round and seating themselves, Taffy and Little Billee and the Laird saw Trilby being led by J—— down the platform, between the players, to the front, her face smiling rather vacantly, her eyes anxiously intent on Svengali in his box.

She made her bows to right and left just as she had done in Paris.

The band struck up the opening bars of 'Ben Bolt,' with which she was announced to make her *début*.

She still stared—but she didn't sing—and they played the little symphony three times.

One could hear Monsieur J—— in a hoarse, anxious whisper saying,

'Mais chantez donc, madame—pour l'amour de Dieu, commencez donc—commencez!'

She turned round with an extraordinary expression of face, and said,

'Chanter? pourquoi donc voulez-vous que je chante, moi? chanter quoi, alors?'

'Mais "Ben Bolt," parbleu—chantez!'

'Ah—"Ben Bolt!" oui—je connais ça!'

Then the band began again.

And she tried, but failed to begin herself. She turned round and said,

'Comment diable voulez-vous que je chante avec tout ce train qu'ils font, ces diables de musiciens!'

'Mais, mon Dieu, madame—qu'est-ce que vous avez donc?' cried Monsieur J——.

'J'ai que j'aime mieux chanter sans toute cette satanée musique, parbleu! J'aime mieux chanter toute seule!'

'Sans musique, alors—mais chantez—chantez!'

The band was stopped—the house was in a state of indescribable wonder and suspense.

She looked all round, and down at herself, and fingered her dress. Then she looked up to the chandelier with a tender, sentimental smile and began—

'Oh, don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?
Sweet Alice with hair so brown,
Who wept with delight when you gave her a smile—'

She had not got further than this when the whole house was in an uproar—shouts from the gallery—shouts of laughter, hoots, hisses, cat-calls, cock-crows.

She stopped and glared like a brave lioness, and called out—

'Qu'est-ce que vous avez donc, tous! tas de vieilles pommes cuites que vous êtes! Est-ce qu'on a peur de vous?' and then, suddenly—

'Why, you're all English, aren't you?

—what's all the row about?—what have you brought me here for?—what have *I* done, I should like to know?'

And in asking these questions the depth and splendour of her voice were so extraordinary—its tone so pathetically feminine, yet so full of hurt and indignant command, that the tumult was stilled for a moment.

It was the voice of some being from another world—some insulted daughter of a race more puissant and nobler than ours; a voice that seemed as if it could never utter a false note.

Then came a voice from the gods in answer—

'Oh, ye're Henglish, har yer? Why don't yer sing as yer *hought* to sing—yer've got *voice* enough, any'ow! why don't yer sing in *tune?*'

'Sing in *tune!*' cried Trilby. 'I didn't

want to sing at all—I only sang because I was asked to sing—that gentleman asked me—that French gentleman with the white waistcoat! I won't sing another note!'

'Oh, yer won't, won't yer! then let us 'ave our money back, or we'll know what for!'

And again the din broke out, and the uproar was frightful.

Monsieur J—— screamed out across the theatre: 'Svengali! Svengali! qu'est-ce qu'elle a donc, votre femme? . . . Elle est devenue folle!'

Indeed she had tried to sing 'Ben Bolt,' but had sung it in her old way—as she used to sing it in the Quartier Latin—the most lamentably grotesque performance ever heard out of a human throat!

'Svengali! Svengali!' shrieked poor Monsieur J——, gesticulating towards the box where Svengali was sitting, quite im-

passible, gazing at Monsieur J——, and smiling a ghastly, sardonic smile, a *rictus* of hate and triumphant revenge—as if he were saying—

'I've got the laugh of you *all*, this time!'

Taffy, the Laird, Little Billee, the whole house, were now staring at Svengali, and his wife was forgotten.

She stood vacantly looking at everybody and everything—the chandelier, Monsieur J——, Svengali in his box, the people in the stalls, in the gallery—and smiling as if the noisy scene amused and excited her.

'Svengali! Svengali! Svengali!'

The whole house took up the cry, derisively. Monsieur J—— led Madame Svengali away; she seemed quite passive. That terrible figure of Svengali still sat, immovable, watching his wife's retreat—still smiling his ghastly smile. All eyes were now turned on him once more.

Monsieur J—— was then seen to enter his box with a policeman and two or three other men, one of them in evening dress. He quickly drew the curtains to; then, a minute or two after, he reappeared on the platform, bowing and scraping to the audience, as pale as death, and called for silence, the gentleman in evening dress by his side; and this person explained that a very dreadful thing had happened — that Monsieur Svengali had suddenly died in that box — of apoplexy or heart disease; that his wife had seen it from her place on the stage, and had apparently gone out of her senses, which accounted for her extraordinary behaviour.

He added that the money would be returned at the doors, and begged the audience to disperse quietly.

Taffy, with his two friends behind him, forced his way to a stage door he knew.

The Laird had no longer any doubts on the score of Trilby's identity—*this* Trilby, at all events!

Taffy knocked and thumped till the door was opened, and gave his card to the man who opened it, stating that he and his friends were old friends of Madame Svengali, and must see her at once.

The man tried to slam the door in his face, but Taffy pushed through, and shut it on the crowd outside, and insisted on being taken to Monsieur J—— immediately; and was so authoritative and big, and looked such a swell, that the man was cowed, and led him.

They passed an open door, through which they had a glimpse of a prostrate form on a table—a man partially undressed, and some men bending over him, doctors probably.

That was the last they saw of Svengali.

Then they were taken to another door, and Monsieur J—— came out, and Taffy explained who they were, and they were admitted.

La Svengali was there, sitting in an armchair by the fire, while several of the band stood round gesticulating, and talking German or Polish or Yiddish. Gecko, on his knees, was alternately chafing her hands and feet. She seemed quite dazed.

But at the sight of Taffy she jumped up and rushed at him, saying: 'Oh, Taffy dear —oh, Taffy! what's it all about? Where on earth am I? What an age since we met!'

Then she caught sight of the Laird, and kissed him; and then she recognised Little Billee.

She looked at him for a long while in great surprise, and then shook hands with him.

'How pale you are! and so changed—you've got a moustache! What's the matter? Why are you all dressed in black, with white cravats, as if you were going to a funeral? Where's Svengali? I should like to go home!'

'Where — what do you call — home, I mean—where is it?' asked Taffy.

'C'est à l'Hôtel de Normandie, dans le Haymarket. On va vous y conduire, madame!' said Monsieur J——.

'Oui—c'est ça!' said Trilby—'Hôtel de Normandie—mais Svengali—où est-ce qu'il est?'

'Hélas! madame—il est très malade!'

'Malade? Qu'est-ce qu'il a? How funny you look, with your moustache, Little Billee! dear, *dear* Little Billee! so pale, so very pale! Are you ill too? Oh, I hope not! How *glad* I am to see you again—you can't tell! though I promised your mother I

wouldn't — never, never! Where are we now, dear Little Billee?'

Monsieur J—— seemed to have lost his head. He was constantly running in and out of the room, distracted. The bandsmen began to talk and try to explain, in incomprehensible French, to Taffy. Gecko seemed to have disappeared. It was a bewildering business—noises from outside, the tramp and bustle and shouts of the departing crowd, people running in and out and asking for Monsieur J——, policemen, firemen, and what not!

Then Little Billee, who had been exerting the most heroic self-control, suggested that Trilby should come to his house in Fitzroy Square, first of all, and be taken out of all this—and the idea struck Taffy as a happy one — and it was proposed to Monsieur J——, who saw that our three friends were old friends of Madame Svengali's, and people

to be trusted; and he was only too glad to be relieved of her, and gave his consent.

Little Billee and Taffy drove to Fitzroy Square to prepare Little Billee's landlady, who was much put out at first at having such a novel and unexpected charge imposed on her. It was all explained to her that it must be so. That Madame Svengali, the greatest singer in Europe and an old friend of her tenant's, had suddenly gone out of her mind from grief at the tragic death of her husband, and that for this night at least the unhappy lady must sleep under that roof—indeed, in Little Billee's own bed, and that he would sleep at a hotel; and that a nurse would be provided at once—it might be only for that one night; and that the lady was as quiet as a lamb, and would probably recover her faculties after a night's rest. A doctor was sent for from close by; and soon Trilby appeared, with the Laird,

and her appearance and her magnificent sables impressed Mrs. Godwin, the landlady —brought her figuratively on her knees. Then Taffy, the Laird, and Little Billee departed again and dispersed—to procure a nurse for the night, to find Gecko, to fetch some of Trilby's belongings from the Hôtel de Normandie, and her maid.

The maid (the old German Jewess and Svengali's relative), distracted by the news of her master's death, had gone to the theatre. Gecko was in the hands of the police. Things had got to a terrible pass. But our three friends did their best, and were up most of the night.

So much for La Svengali's *début* in London.

The present scribe was not present on that memorable occasion, and has written this inadequate and most incomplete description partly from hearsay and private information,

partly from the reports in the contemporary newspapers.

Should any surviving eye-witness of that lamentable fiasco read these pages, and see any gross inaccuracy in this bald account of it, the P. S. will feel deeply obliged to the same for any corrections or additions, and these will be duly acted upon and gratefully acknowledged in all subsequent editions; which will be numerous, no doubt, on account of the great interest still felt in 'La Svengali,' even by those who never saw or heard her (and they are many), and also because the present scribe is better qualified (by his opportunities) for the compiling of this brief biographical sketch than any person now living, with the exception, of course, of 'Taffy' and 'the Laird,' to whose kindness, even more than to his own personal recollections, he owes whatever it may contain of serious historical value.

Next morning they all three went to Fitzroy Square. Little Billee had slept at Taffy's rooms in Jermyn Street.

Trilby seemed quite pathetically glad to see them again. She was dressed simply and plainly—in black; her trunks had been sent from the hotel.

The hospital nurse was with her; the doctor had just left. He had said that she was suffering from some great nervous shock —a pretty safe diagnosis!

Her wits had apparently not come back, and she seemed in no way to realise her position.

'Ah! what it is to see you again, all three! It makes one feel glad to be alive! I've thought of many things, but never of this—never! Three nice clean Englishmen, all speaking English—and *such* dear old friends! Ah! j'aime tant ça—c'est le ciel! I wonder I've got a word of English left!'

Her voice was so soft and sweet and low that these ingenuous remarks sounded like a beautiful song. And she 'made the soft eyes' at them all three, one after another, in her old way; and the soft eyes quickly filled with tears.

She seemed ill and weak and worn out, and insisted on keeping the Laird's hand in hers.

'What's the matter with Svengali? He must be dead!'

They all three looked at each other, perplexed.

'Ah! he's dead! I can see it in your faces. He'd got heart disease. I'm sorry! oh, very sorry indeed! He was always very kind, poor Svengali!'

'Yes. He's dead,' said Taffy.

'And Gecko—dear little Gecko—is he dead too? I saw him last night—he warmed my hands and feet: where were we?'

'No. Gecko's not dead. But he's had to be locked up for a little while. He struck Svengali, you know. You saw it all.'

'I? No! I never saw it. But I *dreamt* something like it! Gecko with a knife, and people holding him, and Svengali bleeding on the ground. That was just before Svengali's illness. He'd cut himself in the neck, you know—with a rusty nail, he told me. I wonder how? . . . But it was wrong of Gecko to strike him. They were such friends. Why did he?'

'Well—it was because Svengali struck you with his conductor's wand when you were rehearsing. Struck you on the fingers and made you cry! don't you remember?'

'Struck *me! rehearsing?*—made me *cry!* what *are* you talking about, dear Taffy? Svengali never *struck* me! He was kindness itself—always! and what should *I* rehearse?'

'Well, the songs you were to sing at the theatre in the evening.'

'Sing at the theatre! *I* never sang at any theatre—except last night, if that big place was a theatre! and they didn't seem to like it! I'll take precious good care never to sing in a theatre again! How they howled! and there was Svengali in the box opposite, laughing at me. Why was I taken there? and why did that funny little Frenchman in the white waistcoat ask me to sing? I know very well I can't sing well enough to sing in a place like that! What a fool I was! It all seems like a bad dream! What was it all about? *Was* it a dream, I wonder!'

'Well—but don't you remember singing at Paris, in the Salle des Bashibazoucks—and at Vienna—St. Petersburg—lots of places?'

'What nonsense, dear—you're thinking of some one else! *I* never sang anywhere! I've

been to Vienna and St. Petersburg—but I never *sang* there—good heavens!'

Then there was a pause, and our three friends looked at her helplessly.

Little Billee said: 'Tell me, Trilby—what made you cut me dead when I bowed to you in the Place de la Concorde, and you were riding with Svengali in that swell carriage?'

'*I* never rode in a swell carriage with Svengali! Omnibuses were more in *our* line! You're dreaming, dear Little Billee—you're taking me for somebody else; and as for my cutting *you*—why, I'd sooner cut myself—into little pieces!'

'*Where* were you staying with Svengali in Paris?'

'I really forget. *Were* we in Paris? Oh yes, of course. Hôtel Bertrand, Place Notre Dame des Victoires.'

'How long have you been going about with Svengali?'

'Oh, months, years—I forget. I was very ill. He cured me.'

'Ill! What was the matter?'

'Oh! I was mad with grief, and pain in my eyes, and wanted to kill myself, when I lost my dear little Jeannot, at Vibraye. I fancied I hadn't been careful enough with him. I was crazed! Don't you remember writing to me there, Taffy—through Angèle Boisse? Such a sweet letter you wrote! I know it by heart! And you too, Sandy'; and she kissed him. 'I wonder where they are, your letters? I've got nothing of my own in the world—not even your dear letters—nor Little Billee's—such lots of them!

'Well, Svengali used to write to me too—and then he got my address from Angèle. . . .

'When Jeannot died, I felt I must kill myself or get away from Vibraye—get away from the people there; so when he was buried

I cut my hair short and got a workman's cap and blouse and trousers and walked all the way to Paris without saying anything to anybody. I didn't want anybody to know; I wanted to escape from Svengali, who wrote that he was coming there to fetch me. I wanted to hide in Paris. When I got there at last it was two o'clock in the morning, and I was in dreadful pain—and I'd lost all my money—thirty francs—through a hole in my trousers' pocket. Besides, I had a row with a carter in the Halle. He thought I was a man, and hit me and gave me a black eye, just because I patted his horse and fed it with a carrot I'd been trying to eat myself. He was tipsy, I think. Well, I looked over the bridge at the river—just by the Morgue—and wanted to jump in. But the Morgue sickened me, so I hadn't the pluck. Svengali used to be always talking about the Morgue, and my going there some day. He

used to say he'd come and look at me there, and the idea made me so sick I couldn't. I got bewildered, and quite stupid.

'Then I went to Angèle's, in the Rue des Cloîtres Ste. Pétronille, and waited about; but I hadn't the courage to ring, so I went to the Place St. Anatole des Arts, and looked up at the old studio window, and thought how comfortable it was in there, with the big settee near the stove, and all that, and felt inclined to ring up Madame Vinard; and then I remembered Little Billee was ill there, and his mother and sister were with him. Angèle had written me, you know. Poor Little Billee! There he was, very ill!

'So I walked about the place, and up and down the Rue des Trois Mauvais Ladres. Then I went down the Rue de Seine to the river again, and again I hadn't the pluck to jump in. Besides, there was a *sergent-de-*

ville who followed and watched me. And the fun of it was that I knew him quite well, and he didn't know me a bit. It was Célestin Beaumollet, who got so tipsy on Christmas night. Don't you remember? The tall one, who was pitted with the small-pox.

'Then I walked about till near daylight. Then I could stand it no longer, and went to Svengali's, in the Rue Tireliard, but he'd moved to the Rue des Saints Pères; and I went there and found him. I didn't want to a bit, but I couldn't help myself. It was fate, I suppose! He was very kind, and cured me almost directly, and got me coffee and bread and butter—the best I ever tasted—and a warm bath from Bidet Frères, in the Rue Savonarole. It was heavenly! And I slept for two days and two nights! And then he told me how fond he was of me, and how he would always cure me, and take care of me, and marry me, if I would

go away with him. He said he would devote his whole life to me, and took a small room for me, next to his.

'I stayed with him there a week, never going out or seeing any one, mostly asleep. I'd caught a chill.

'He played in two concerts and made a lot of money; and then we went away to Germany together; and no one was a bit the wiser.'

'And *did* he marry you?'

'Well—no. He couldn't, poor fellow! He'd already got a wife living, and three children, which he declared were not his. They live in Elberfeld in Prussia; she keeps a small sweet-stuff shop there. He behaved very badly to them. But it was not through me! He'd deserted them long before; but he used to send them plenty of money when he'd got any; I made him, for I was very sorry for her. He was always talking about

her, and what she said and what she did, and imitating her saying her prayers and eating pickled cucumber with one hand and drinking schnapps with the other, so as not to lose any time; till he made me die of laughing. He could be very funny, Svengali, though he *was* German, poor dear! And then Gecko joined us, and Marta.'

'Who's Marta?'

'His aunt. She cooked for us, and all that. She's coming here presently; she sent word from the hotel; she's very fond of him. Poor Marta! Poor Gecko! What *will* they ever do without Svengali?'

'Then what did he do to live?'

'Oh! he played at concerts, I suppose—and all that.'

'Did you ever hear him?'

'Yes. Sometimes Marta took me; at the beginning, you know. He was always

very much applauded. He plays beautifully. Everybody said so.'

'Did he never try and teach you to sing?'

'Oh, maïe aïe! not he! Why, he always laughed when I tried to sing; and so did Marta; and so did Gecko! It made them roar! I used to sing "Ben Bolt." They used to make me, just for fun—and go into fits. *I* didn't mind a scrap. I'd had no training, you know!'

'Was there anybody else he knew—any other woman?'

'Not that *I* know of! He always made out he was so fond of me that he couldn't even *look* at another woman. Poor Svengali!' (Here her eyes filled with tears again.) 'He was always very kind! But I never could be fond of him in the way he wished—never! It made me sick even to think of! Once I used to hate him—in Paris—in the studio; don't you remember?

'He hardly ever left me; and then Marta looked after me—for I've always been weak and ill, and often so languid that I could hardly walk across the room. It was that three days' walk from Vibraye to Paris. I never got over it.

'I used to try and do all I could—be a daughter to him, as I couldn't be anything else—mend his things, and all that, and cook him little French dishes. I fancy he was very poor at one time; we were always moving from place to place. But I always had the best of everything. He insisted on that—even if he had to go without himself. It made him quite unhappy when I wouldn't eat, so I used to force myself.

'Then, as soon as I felt uneasy about things, or had any pain, he would say, "Dors, ma mignonne!" and I would sleep at once—for hours, I think—and wake up, oh, so tired! and find him kneeling by me,

always so anxious and kind—and Marta and Gecko! and sometimes we had the doctor, and I was ill in bed.

'Gecko used to dine and breakfast with us—you've no idea what an angel he is, poor little Gecko! But what a dreadful thing to strike Svengali! *Why* did he? Svengali taught him all he knows!'

'And you knew no one else—no other woman?'

'No one that I can remember—except Marta—not a soul!'

'And that beautiful dress you had on last night?'

'It isn't mine. It's on the bed upstairs, and so's the fur cloak. They belong to Marta. She's got lots of them, lovely things—silk, satin, velvet—and lots of beautiful jewels. Marta deals in them, and makes lots of money.

'I've often tried them on; I'm very easy

to fit,' she said, 'being so tall and thin. And poor Svengali would kneel down and cry, and kiss my hands and feet, and tell me I was his goddess and empress, and all that, which I hate. And Marta used to cry, too. And then he would say—

"'Et maintenant dors, ma mignonne!"

'And when I woke up I was so tired that I went to sleep again on my own account.

'But he was very patient. Oh, dear me! I've always been a poor, helpless, useless log and burden to him!

'Once I actually walked in my sleep—and woke up in the market-place at Prague—and found an immense crowd, and poor Svengali bleeding from the forehead, in a faint on the ground. He'd been knocked down by a horse and cart, he told me. He'd got his guitar with him. I suppose he and Gecko had been playing somewhere, for Gecko had his fiddle. If Gecko hadn't been

there, I don't know what we should have done. You never saw such queer people as they were—such crowds—you'd think they'd never seen an Englishwoman before. The noise they made, and the things they gave me . . . some of them went down on their knees, and kissed my hands and the skirts of my gown.

'He was ill in bed for a week after that, and I nursed him, and he was very grateful. Poor Svengali! God knows *I* felt grateful to *him* for many things! Tell me how he died! I hope he hadn't much pain.'

They told her it was quite sudden, from heart disease.

'Ah! I knew he had that; he wasn't a healthy man; he used to smoke too much. Marta used always to be very anxious.'

Just then Marta came in.

Marta was a fat, elderly Jewess of rather a grotesque and ignoble type. She

seemed overcome with grief — all but prostrate.

Trilby hugged and kissed her, and took off her bonnet and shawl, and made her sit down in a big arm-chair, and got her a foot-stool.

She couldn't speak a word of anything but Polish and a little German. Trilby had also picked up a little German, and with this and by means of signs, and no doubt through a long intimacy with each other's ways, they understood each other very well. She seemed a very good old creature, and very fond of Trilby, but in mortal terror of the three Englishmen.

Lunch was brought up for the two women and the nurse, and our friends left them, promising to come again that day.

They were utterly bewildered; and the Laird would have it that there was another Madame Svengali somewhere, the real one,

and that Trilby was a fraud—self-deceived and self-deceiving—quite unconsciously so, of course.

Truth looked out of her eyes, as it always had done—truth was in every line of her face.

The truth only—nothing but the truth could ever be told in that 'voice of velvet,' which rang as true when she spoke as that of any thrush or nightingale, however rebellious it might be now (and for ever perhaps) to artificial melodic laws and limitations and restraints. The long training it had been subjected to had made it 'a wonder, a world's delight,' and though she might never sing another note, her mere speech would always be more golden than any silence, whatever she might say.

Except on the one particular point of her singing, she had seemed absolutely sane—so, at least, thought Taffy, the Laird, and

Little Billee. And each thought to himself, besides, that this last incarnation of Trilbyness was quite the sweetest, most touching, most endearing of all.

They had not failed to note how rapidly she had aged, now that they had seen her without her rouge and pearl-powder; she looked thirty at least—she was only twenty-three.

Her hands were almost transparent in their waxen whiteness; delicate little frosty wrinkles had gathered round her eyes; there were gray streaks in her hair; all strength and straightness and elasticity seemed to have gone out of her with the memory of her endless triumphs (if she really *was* La Svengali), and of her many wanderings from city to city all over Europe.

It was evident enough that the sudden stroke which had destroyed her power of singing had left her physically a wreck.

But she was one of those rarely-gifted beings who cannot look or speak or even stir without waking up (and satisfying) some vague longing that lies dormant in the hearts of most of us, men and women alike; grace, charm, magnetism—whatever the nameless seduction should be called that she possessed to such an unusual degree—she had lost none of it when she lost her high spirits, her buoyant health and energy, her wits!

Tuneless and insane, she was more of a siren than ever—a quite unconscious siren—without any guile, who appealed to the heart all the more directly and irresistibly that she could no longer stir the passions.

All this was keenly felt by all three—each in his different way—by Taffy and Little Billee especially.

All her past life was forgiven—her sins of omission and commission! And whatever might be her fate—recovery, madness,

disease, or death—the care of her till she died or recovered should be the principal business of their lives.

Both had loved her. All three, perhaps. One had been loved by her as passionately, as purely, as unselfishly, as any man could wish to be loved, and in some extraordinary manner had recovered, after many years, at the mere sudden sight and sound of her, his lost share in our common inheritance—the power to love, and all its joy and sorrow; without which he had found life not worth living, though he had possessed every other gift and blessing in such abundance.

'Oh, Circe, poor Circe, dear Circe, divine enchantress that you were!' he said to himself, in his excitable way. 'A mere look from your eyes, a mere note of your heavenly voice, has turned a poor, miserable, callous brute back into a man again! and I will never forget it—never! And now that

a still worse trouble than mine has befallen you, you shall always be first in my thoughts till the end!'

And Taffy felt pretty much the same, though he was not by way of talking to himself so eloquently about things as Little Billee.

As they lunched, they read the accounts of the previous evening's events in different papers, three or four of which (including the *Times*) had already got leaders about the famous but unhappy singer who had been so suddenly widowed and struck down in the midst of her glory. All these accounts were more or less correct. In one paper it was mentioned that Madame Svengali was under the roof and care of Mr. William Bagot, the painter, in Fitzroy Square.

The inquest on Svengali was to take place that afternoon, and also Gecko's

examination at the Bow Street Police Court, for his assault.

Taffy was allowed to see Gecko, who was remanded till the result of the *post-mortem* should be made public. But beyond inquiring most anxiously and minutely after Trilby, and betraying the most passionate concern for her, he would say nothing, and seemed indifferent as to his own fate.

When they went to Fitzroy Square, late in the afternoon, they found that many people, musical, literary, fashionable, and otherwise (and many foreigners), had called to inquire after Madame Svengali, but no one had been admitted to see her. Mrs. Godwin was much elated by the importance of her new lodger.

Trilby had been writing to Angèle Boisse, at her old address in the Rue des Cloîtres Ste. Pétronille, in the hope that this letter would find her still there. She was anxious

to go back and be a *blanchisseuse de fin* with her friend. It was a kind of nostalgia for Paris, the Quartier Latin, her clean old trade.

This project our three heroes did not think it necessary to discuss with her just yet; she seemed quite unfit for work of any kind.

The doctor, who had seen her again, had been puzzled by her strange physical weakness, and wished for a consultation with some special authority; Little Billee, who was intimate with most of the great physicians, wrote about her to Sir Oliver Calthorpe.

She seemed to find a deep happiness in being with her three old friends, and talked and listened with all her old eagerness and geniality, and much of her old gaiety, in spite of her strange and sorrowful position. But for this it was impossible to realise that

her brain was affected in the slightest degree, except when some reference was made to her singing, and this seemed to annoy and irritate her, as though she were being made fun of. The whole of her marvellous musical career, and everything connected with it, had been clean wiped out of her recollection.

She was very anxious to get into other quarters, that Little Billee should suffer no inconvenience, and they promised to take rooms for her and Marta on the morrow.

They told her cautiously all about Svengali and Gecko; she was deeply concerned, but betrayed no such poignant anguish as might have been expected. The thought of Gecko troubled her most, and she showed much anxiety as to what might befall him.

Next day she moved with Marta to some lodgings in Charlotte Street, where every-

thing was made as comfortable for them as possible.

Sir Oliver saw her with Dr. Thorne (the doctor who was attending her) and Dr. Jakes Talboys.

Sir Oliver took the greatest interest in her case, both for her sake and his friend Little Billee's. Also his own, for he was charmed with her. He saw her three times in the course of the week, but could not say for certain what was the matter with her, beyond taking the very gravest view of her condition. For all he could advise or prescribe, her weakness and physical prostration increased rapidly, through no cause he could discover. Her insanity was not enough to account for it. She lost weight daily; she seemed to be wasting and fading away from sheer general atrophy.

Two or three times he took her and Marta for a drive.

On one of these occasions, as they went down Charlotte Street, she saw a shop with transparent French blinds in the window, and through them some Frenchwomen, with neat white caps, ironing. It was a French *blanchisserie de fin*, and the sight of it interested and excited her so much that she must needs insist on being put down and on going into it.

'Je voudrais bien parler à la patronne, si ça ne la dérange pas,' she said.

The *patronne*, a genial Parisian, was much astonished to hear a great French lady, in costly garments, evidently a person of fashion and importance, applying to her rather humbly for employment in the business, and showing a thorough knowledge of the work (and of the Parisian workwoman's colloquial dialect). Marta managed to catch the *patronne's* eye, and tapped her own forehead significantly, and Sir Oliver nodded. So the good woman

humoured the great lady's fancy, and promised her abundance of employment whenever she should want it.

Employment! Poor Trilby was hardly strong enough to walk back to the carriage; and this was her last outing.

But this little adventure had filled her with hope and good spirits—for she had as yet received no answer from Angèle Boisse (who was in Marseilles), and had begun to realise how dreary the Quartier Latin would be without Jeannot, without Angèle, without the *trois Angliches* in the Place St. Anatole des Arts.

She was not allowed to see any of the strangers who came and made kind inquiries. This her doctors had strictly forbidden. Any reference to music or singing irritated her beyond measure. She would say to Marta, in bad German—

'Tell them, Marta—what nonsense it is!

They are taking me for another—they are mad. They are trying to make a fool of me!'

And Marta would betray great uneasiness—almost terror—when she was appealed to in this way.

PART EIGHTH

'La vie est vaine :
Un peu d'amour,
Un peu de haine. . . .
Et puis—bonjour !

'La vie est brève :
Un peu d'espoir,
Un peu de rève. . . .
Et puis—bonsoir.

SVENGALI had died from heart disease. The cut he had received from Gecko had not apparently (as far as the verdict of a coroner's inquest could be trusted) had any effect in aggravating his malady or hastening his death.

But Gecko was sent for trial at the Old Bailey, and sentenced to hard labour for six

months (a sentence which, if I remember aright, gave rise to much comment at the time). Taffy saw him again, but with no better result than before. He chose to preserve an obstinate silence on his relations with the Svengalis and their relations with each other.

When he was told how hopelessly ill and insane Madame Svengali was, he shed a few tears, and said: 'Ah, pauvrette, pauvrette—ah! monsieur—je l'aimais tant, je l'aimais tant! il n'y en a pas beaucoup comme elle, Dieu de misère! C'est un ange du Paradis!'

And not another word was to be got out of him.

It took some time to settle Svengali's affairs after his death. No will was found. His old mother came over from Germany, and two of his sisters, but no wife. The comic wife and the three children, and the sweet-stuff shop in Elberfeld, had been

humorous inventions of his own—a kind of Mrs. Harris!

He left three thousand pounds, every penny of which (and of far larger sums that he had spent) had been earned by 'La Svengali,' but nothing came to Trilby of this; nothing but the clothes and jewels he had given her, and in this respect he had been lavish enough; and there were countless costly gifts from emperors, kings, great people of all kinds. Trilby was under the impression that all these belonged to Marta. Marta behaved admirably; she seemed bound hand and foot to Trilby by a kind of slavish adoration, as that of a plain old mother for a brilliant and beautiful but dying child.

It soon became evident that, whatever her disease might be, Trilby had but a very short time to live.

She was soon too weak even to be taken

out in a Bath chair, and remained all day in her large sitting-room with Marta; and there, to her great and only joy, she received her three old friends every afternoon, and gave them coffee, and made them smoke cigarettes of caporal as of old; and their hearts were daily harrowed as they watched her rapid decline.

Day by day she grew more beautiful in their eyes, in spite of her increasing pallor and emaciation—her skin was so pure and white and delicate, and the bones of her face so admirable!

Her eyes recovered all their old humorous brightness when *les trois Angliches* were with her, and the expression of her face was so wistful and tender for all her playfulness, so full of eager clinging to existence and to them, that they felt the memory of it would haunt them for ever, and be the sweetest and saddest memory of their lives.

Her quick, though feeble gestures, full of reminiscences of the vigorous and lively girl they had known a few years back, sent waves of pity through them and pure brotherly love; and the incomparable tones and changes and modulations of her voice, as she chatted and laughed, bewitched them almost as much as when she had sung the 'Nussbaum' of Schumann in the Salle des Bashibazoucks.

Sometimes Lorrimer came, and Antony, and the Greek. It was like a genial little court of bohemia. And Lorrimer, Antony, the Laird, and Little Billee made those beautiful chalk and pencil studies of her head which are now so well known—all so singularly like her, and so singularly unlike each other! *Trilby vue à travers quatre tempéraments!*

These afternoons were probably the happiest poor Trilby had ever spent in her

life — with these dear people round her, speaking the language she loved; talking of old times and jolly Paris days, she never thought of the morrow.

But later—at night, in the small hours—she would wake up with a start from some dream full of tender and blissful recollection, and suddenly realise her own mischance, and feel the icy hand of that which was to come before many morrows were over; and taste the bitterness of death so keenly that she longed to scream out loud, and get up, and walk up and down, and wring her hands at the dreadful thought of parting for ever!

But she lay motionless and mum as a poor little frightened mouse in a trap, for fear of waking up the good old tired Marta, who was snoring at her side.

And in an hour or two the bitterness would pass away, the creeps and the horrors; and the stoical spirit of resignation would

steal over her—the balm, the blessed calm! and all her old bravery would come back.

And then she would sink into sleep again, and dream more blissfully than ever, till the good Marta woke her with a motherly kiss and a fragrant cup of coffee; and she would find, feeble as she was, and doomed as she felt herself to be, that joy cometh of a morning; and life was still sweet for her, with yet a whole day to look forward to.

One day she was deeply moved at receiving a visit from Mrs. Bagot, who, at Little Billee's earnest desire, had come all the way from Devonshire to see her.

As the graceful little lady came in, pale and trembling all over, Trilby rose from her chair to receive her, and rather timidly put out her hand, and smiled in a frightened manner. Neither could speak for a second. Mrs. Bagot stood stock-still by the door

gazing (with all her heart in her eyes) at the so terribly altered Trilby—the girl she had once so dreaded.

Trilby, who seemed also bereft of motion, and whose face and lips were ashen, exclaimed, 'I'm afraid I haven't quite kept my promise to you, after all! but things have turned out so differently! anyhow, you needn't have any fear of me *now*.'

At the mere sound of that voice, Mrs. Bagot, who was as impulsive, emotional, and unregulated as her son, rushed forward, crying, 'Oh, my poor girl, my poor girl!' and caught her in her arms, and kissed and caressed her, and burst into a flood of tears, and forced her back into her chair, hugging her as if she were a long-lost child.

'I love you now as much as I always admired you—pray believe it!'

'Oh, how kind of you to say that!' said Trilby, her own eyes filling. 'I'm not at

all the dangerous or designing person you thought. I knew quite well I wasn't a proper person to marry your son all the time; and told him so again and again. It was very stupid of me to say yes at last. I was miserable directly after, I assure you. Somehow I couldn't help myself—I was driven.'

'Oh, don't talk of that! don't talk of that! You've never been to blame in any way—I've long known it—I've been full of remorse! You've been in my thoughts always, night and day. Forgive a poor jealous mother. As if *any* man could help loving you—or any woman either. Forgive me!'

'Oh, Mrs. Bagot—forgive *you!* What a funny idea! But, anyhow, you have forgiven *me*, and that's all I care for now. I was very fond of your son—as fond as could be. I am now, but in quite a different sort of way, you know—the sort of way *you*

must be, I fancy! There was never another like him that I ever met—anywhere! You *must* be so proud of him; who wouldn't? *Nobody's* good enough for him. I would have been only too glad to be his servant, his humble servant! I used to tell him so —but he wouldn't hear of it—he was much too kind! He always thought of others before himself. And, oh! how rich and famous he's become! I've heard all about it, and it did me good. It does me more good to think of than anything else; far more than if I were to be ever so rich and famous myself, I can tell you!'

This from La Svengali, whose overpowering fame, so utterly forgotten by herself, was still ringing all over Europe; whose lamentable illness and approaching death were being mourned and discussed and commented upon in every capital of the civilised world, as one distressing bulletin appeared

after another. She might have been a royal personage!

Mrs. Bagot knew, of course, the strange form her insanity had taken, and made no allusion to the flood of thoughts that rushed through her own brain as she listened to this towering goddess of song, this poor mad queen of the nightingales, humbly gloating over her son's success . . .

Poor Mrs. Bagot had just come from Little Billee's, in Fitzroy Square, close by. There she had seen Taffy, in a corner of Little Billee's studio, laboriously answering endless letters and telegrams from all parts of Europe—for the good Taffy had constituted himself Trilby's secretary and *homme d'affaires*—unknown to her, of course. And this was no sinecure (though he liked it): putting aside the numerous people he had to see and be interviewed by, there were kind inquiries and messages of condolence and

sympathy from nearly all the crowned heads of Europe, through their chamberlains; applications for help from unsuccessful musical strugglers all over the world to the pre-eminently successful one; beautiful letters from great and famous people, musical or otherwise; disinterested offers of service; interested proposals for engagements when the present trouble should be over; beggings for an interview from famous *impresarios*, to obtain which no distance would be thought too great, etc., etc., etc. It was endless, in English, French, German, Italian—in languages quite incomprehensible (many letters had to remain unanswered)—Taffy took an almost malicious pleasure in explaining all this to Mrs. Bagot.

Then there was a constant rolling of carriages up to the door, and a thundering of Little Billee's knocker: Lord and Lady Palmerston wish to know—the Lord Chief Justice

wishes to know—the Dean of Westminster wishes to know—the Marchioness of Westminster wishes to know—everybody wishes to know if there is any better news of Madame Svengali!

These were small things, truly; but Mrs. Bagot was a small person from a small village in Devonshire, and one whose heart and eye had hitherto been filled by no larger image than that of Little Billee; and Little Billee's fame, as she now discovered for the first time, did not quite fill the entire universe.

And she musn't be too much blamed if all these obvious signs of a world-wide colossal celebrity impressed and even awed her a little.

Madame Svengali! Why, this was the beautiful girl whom she remembered so well, whom she had so grandly discarded with a word, and who had accepted her *congé* so meekly in a minute; whom, indeed, she had

been cursing in her heart for years, because —because what?

Poor Mrs. Bagot felt herself turn hot and red all over, and humbled herself to the very dust, and almost forgot that she had been in the right, after all, and that 'la grande Trilby' was certainly no fit match for her son!

So she went quite humbly to see Trilby, and found a poor pathetic mad creature still more humble than herself, who still apologised for—for what?

A poor, pathetic, mad creature who had clean forgotten that she was the greatest singer in all the world—one of the greatest artists that had ever lived; but who remembered with shame and contrition that she had once taken the liberty of yielding (after endless pressure and repeated disinterested refusals of her own, and out of sheer irresistible affection) to the passionate pleadings of a

little obscure art student, a mere boy—no better off than herself—just as penniless and insignificant a nobody; but—the son of Mrs. Bagot!

All due sense of proportion died out of the poor lady as she remembered and realised all this!

And then Trilby's pathetic beauty, so touching, so winning, in its rapid decay; the nameless charm of look and voice and manner that was her special apanage, and which her malady and singular madness had only increased; her childlike simplicity, her transparent forgetfulness of self—all these so fascinated and entranced Mrs. Bagot, whose quick susceptibility to such impressions was just as keen as her son's, that she very soon found herself all but worshipping this fast-fading lily—for so she called her in her own mind—quite forgetting (or affecting to forget) on what very questionable soil the lily had

been reared, and through what strange vicissitudes of evil and corruption it had managed to grow so tall and white and fragrant!

Oh, strange compelling power of weakness and grace and prettiness combined, and sweet, sincere unconscious natural manners! not to speak of world-wide fame!

For Mrs. Bagot was just a shrewd little conventional British country matron of the good upper middle-class type, bristling all over with provincial proprieties and respectabilities, a philistine of the philistines, in spite of her artistic instincts; one who for years had (rather unjustly) thought of Trilby as a wanton and perilous siren, an unchaste and unprincipled and most dangerous daughter of Heth, and the special enemy of her house.

And here she was—like all the rest of us monads and nomads and bohemians—just sitting at Trilby's feet. . . . 'A washerwoman! a figure model! and Heaven knows

what besides!' and she had never even heard her sing!

It was truly comical to see and hear!

Mrs. Bagot did not go back to Devonshire. She remained in Fitzroy Square, at her son's, and spent most of her time with Trilby, doing and devising all kinds of things to distract and amuse her, and lead her thoughts gently to heaven, and soften for her the coming end of all.

Trilby had a way of saying, and especially of looking, 'Thank you' that made one wish to do as many things for her as one could, it only to make her say and look it again.

And she had retained much of her old, quaint, and amusing manner of telling things, and had much to tell still left of her wandering life, although there were so many strange lapses in her powers of memory — gaps — which, if they could only have been filled

up, would have been full of such surpassing interest!

Then she was never tired of talking and hearing of Little Billee; and that was a subject of which Mrs. Bagot could never tire either!

Then there were the recollections of her childhood. One day, in a drawer, Mrs. Bagot came upon a faded daguerreotype of a woman in a Tam o' Shanter, with a face so sweet and beautiful and saint-like that it almost took her breath away. It was Trilby's mother.

'Who and what was your mother, Trilby?'

'Ah, poor mamma!' said Trilby, and she looked at the portrait a long time. 'Ah, she was ever so much prettier than that! Mamma was once a *demoiselle de comptoir*—that's a barmaid, you know—at the Montagnards Écossais, in the Rue du Paradis Pois-

sonnière—a place where men used to drink and smoke without sitting down. That was unfortunate, wasn't it?

'Papa loved her with all his heart, although, of course, she wasn't his equal. They were married at the Embassy, in the Rue du Faubourg St.-Honoré.

'*Her* parents weren't married at all. Her mother was the daughter of a boatman on Loch Ness, near a place called Drumnadrochit; but her father was the Honourable Colonel Desmond. He was related to all sorts of great people in England and Ireland. He behaved very badly to my grandmother and to poor mamma—his own daughter! deserted them both! Not very *honourable* of him, *was* it? And that's all I know about him.'

And then she went on to tell of the home in Paris that might have been so happy but for her father's passion for drink; of her

parents' deaths, and little Jeannot, and so forth. And Mrs. Bagot was much moved and interested by these naïve revelations, which accounted in a measure for so much that seemed unaccountable in this extraordinary woman; who thus turned out to be a kind of cousin (though on the wrong side of the blanket) to no less a person than the famous Duchess of Towers.

With what joy would that ever kind and gracious lady have taken poor Trilby to her bosom had she only known! She had once been all the way from Paris to Vienna merely to hear her sing. But, unfortunately, the Svengalis had just left for St. Petersburg, and she had her long journey for nothing!

Mrs. Bagot brought her many good books, and read them to her—Dr. Cummings on the approaching end of the world, and other works of a like comforting tend-

ency for those who are just about to leave it; the *Pilgrim's Progress*, sweet little tracts, and what not.

Trilby was so grateful that she listened with much patient attention. Only now and then a faint gleam of amusement would steal over her face, and her lips would almost form themselves to ejaculate, 'Oh, maïe, aïe!'

Then Mrs. Bagot, as a reward for such winning docility, would read her *David Copperfield*, and that was heavenly indeed!

But the best of all was for Trilby to look over John Leech's *Pictures of Life and Character*, just out. She had never seen any drawings of Leech before, except now and then in an occasional *Punch* that turned up in the studio in Paris. And they never palled upon her, and taught her more of the aspect of English life (the life she loved) than any book she had ever read. She laughed and laughed; and

it was almost as sweet to listen to as if she were vocalising the quick part in Chopin's Impromptu.

One day she said, her lips trembling: 'I can't make out why you're so wonderfully kind to me, Mrs. Bagot. I hope you have not forgotten who and what I am, and what my story is. I hope you haven't forgotten that I'm not a respectable woman?'

'Oh, my dear child—don't ask me. . . . I only know that you are you! . . . and I am I! and that is enough for me . . . you're my poor, gentle, patient, suffering daughter, whatever else you are—more sinned against than sinning, I feel sure! But there . . . I've misjudged you so, and been so unjust, that I would give worlds to make you some amends . . . besides, I should be just as fond of you if you'd committed a murder,

I really believe—you're so strange! you're irresistible! Did you ever, in all your life, meet anybody that *wasn't* fond of you?'

Trilby's eyes moistened with tender pleasure at such a pretty compliment. Then, after a few minutes' thought, she said, with engaging candour and quite simply: 'No, I can't say I ever did, that I can think of just now. But I've forgotten such lots of people!'

One day Mrs. Bagot told Trilby that her brother-in-law, Mr. Thomas Bagot, would much like to come and talk to her.

'Was that the gentleman who came with you to the studio in Paris?'

'Yes.'

'Why, he's a clergyman, isn't he? What does he want to come and talk to *me* about?'

'Ah! my dear child . . .' said Mrs. Bagot, her eyes filling.

Trilby was thoughtful for a while, and then said: 'I'm going to die, I suppose. Oh yes! oh yes! There's no mistake about that!'

'Dear Trilby, we are all in the hands of an Almighty Merciful God!' And the tears rolled down Mrs. Bagot's cheeks.

After a long pause, during which she gazed out of the window, Trilby said, in an abstracted kind of way, as though she were talking to herself: 'Après tout, c'est pas déjà si raide, de claquer! J'en ai tant vus, qui ont passé par la! Au bout du fossé la culbute, ma foi!'

'What are you saying to yourself in French, Trilby? Your French is so difficult to understand!'

'Oh, I beg your pardon! I was thinking it's not so difficult to die, after all! I've

seen such lots of people do it. I've nursed them, you know — papa and mamma and Jeannot, and Angèle Boisse's mother-in-law, and a poor *casseur de pierres*, Colin Maigret, who lived in the Impasse des Taupes St. Germain. He'd been run over by an omnibus in the Rue Vaugirard, and had to have both his legs cut off just above the knee. They none of them seemed to mind dying a bit. They weren't a bit afraid! *I'm* not!

'Poor people don't think much of death. Rich people shouldn't either. They should be taught when they're quite young to laugh at it and despise it, like the Chinese. The Chinese die of laughing just as their heads are being cut off, and cheat the executioner! It's all in the day's work, and we're all in the same boat—so who's afraid!'

'Dying is not all, my poor child! Are you prepared to meet your Maker face to

face? Have you ever thought about God, and the possible wrath to come if you should die unrepentant?'

'Oh, but I sha'n't! I've been repenting all my life! Besides, there'll be no wrath for any of us—not even the worst! *Il y aura amnistie générale!* Papa told me so, and he'd been a clergyman, like Mr. Thomas Bagot. I often think about God. I'm very fond of Him. One *must* have something perfect to look up to and be fond of—even if it's only an idea! even if it's too good to be true!

'Though some people don't even believe He exists! Le père Martin didn't—but, of course, *he* was only a *chiffonnier*, and doesn't count.

'One day, though, Durien, the sculptor, who's very clever, and a very good fellow indeed, said:

'"Vois-tu, Trilby—I'm very much afraid

He doesn't really exist, le bon Dieu! most unfortunately for *me*, for I *adore* Him! I never do a piece of work without thinking how nice it would be if I could only please *Him* with it!"

'And I've often thought, myself, how heavenly it must be to be able to paint, or sculpt, or make music, or write beautiful poetry, for that very reason!

'Why, once on a very hot afternoon we were sitting, a lot of us, in the court-yard outside la mère Martin's shop, drinking coffee with an old Invalide called Bastide Lendormi, one of the Vieille Garde, who'd only got one leg and one arm and one eye, and everybody was very fond of him. Well, a model called Mimi la Salope came out of the Mont-de-piété opposite, and Père Martin called out to her to come and sit down, and gave her a cup of coffee, and asked her to sing.

'She sang a song of Béranger's, about Napoleon the Great, in which it says—

> '"Parlez-nous de lui, grandmère!
> Grandmère, parlez-nous de lui!'

I suppose she sang it very well, for it made old Bastide Lendormi cry; and when Père Martin *blagué'd* him about it, he said—

'"C'est égal, voyez-vous! to sing like that is *to pray!*"

'And then I thought how lovely it would be if *I* could only sing like Mimi la Salope, and I've thought so ever since—just to *pray!*'

'*What!* Trilby? if *you* could only sing like—— Oh, but never mind, I forgot! Tell me, Trilby—do you ever pray to Him, as other people pray?'

'Pray to Him? Well, no—not often—not in words and on my knees and with my hands together, you know! *Thinking's* praying, very often—don't you think so?

And so's being sorry and ashamed when one's done a mean thing, and glad when one's resisted a temptation, and grateful when it's a fine day and one's enjoying one's self without hurting any one else! What is it but praying when you try and bear up after losing all you cared to live for? And very good praying too! There can be prayers without words just as well as songs, I suppose; and Svengali used to say that songs without words are the best!

'And then it seems mean to be always asking for things. Besides, you don't get them any the faster that way, and that shows!

'La mère Martin used to be always praying. And Père Martin used always to laugh at her; yet he always seemed to get the things *he* wanted oftenest!

'*I* prayed once, very hard indeed! I prayed for Jeannot not to die!'

'Well—but how do you *repent*, Trilby, if

you do not humble yourself, and pray for forgiveness on your knees?'

'Oh, well—I don't exactly know! Look here, Mrs. Bagot, I'll tell you the lowest and meanest thing I ever did. . . .'

(Mrs. Bagot felt a little nervous.)

'I'd promised to take Jeannot on Palm-Sunday to St. Philippe du Roule, to hear l'abbé Bergamot. But Durien (that's the sculptor, you know) asked me to go with him to St. Germain, where there was a fair, or something; and with Mathieu, who was a student in law; and a certain Victorine Letellier, who—who was Mathieu's mistress, in fact—a lace-mender in the Rue Ste. Maritorne la Pocharde. And so I went on Sunday morning to tell Jeannot that I couldn't take him.

'He cried so dreadfully that I thought I'd give up the others and take him to St. Philippe, as I'd promised. But then Durien

and Mathieu and Victorine drove up and waited outside, and so I *didn't* take him, and went with them, and I didn't enjoy anything all day, and was miserable.

'They were in an open carriage with two horses; it was Mathieu's treat, and Jeannot might have ridden on the box by the coachman without being in anybody's way. But I was afraid they didn't want him, as they didn't say anything, and so I didn't dare ask —and Jeannot saw us drive away, and I *couldn't* look back! And the worst of it is that when we were half-way to St. Germain, Durien said, "What a pity you didn't bring Jeannot!" and they were all sorry I hadn't.

'It was six or seven years ago, and I really believe I've thought of it every day, and sometimes in the middle of the night!

'Ah! and when Jeannot was dying! and when he was dead—the remembrance of that Palm-Sunday!

'And if *that's* not repenting, I don't know what is!'

'Oh, Trilby, what nonsense! *that's* nothing; good heavens!—putting off a small child! I'm thinking of far worse things—when you were in the Quartier Latin, you know—sitting to painters and sculptors. . . . Surely, so attractive as you are. . . .'

'Oh yes. . . . I know what you mean—it was horrid, and I was frightfully ashamed of myself; and it wasn't amusing a bit; *nothing* was, till I met your son and Taffy and dear Sandy M'Alister! But then it wasn't deceiving or disappointing anybody, or hurting their feelings—it was only hurting myself!

'Besides, all that sort of thing, in women, is punished severely enough down here, God knows! unless one's a Russian empress like Catherine the Great, or a grande dame like

lots of them, or a great genius like Madame Rachel or George Sand!

'Why, if it hadn't been for that, and sitting for the figure, I should have felt myself good enough to marry your son, *although* I was only a *blanchisseuse de fin*—you've said so yourself!

'And I should have made him a good wife—of that I feel sure. He wanted to live all his life at Barbizon, and paint, you know; and didn't care for society in the least. Anyhow, I should have been equal to such a life as that! Lots of their wives are *blanchisseuses* over there, or people of that sort; and they get on very well indeed, and nobody troubles about it!

'So I think I've been pretty well punished—richly as I've deserved to!"

'Trilby, have you ever been confirmed?'

'I forget. I fancy not!'

'Oh dear, oh dear! And do you know about

our blessed Saviour, and the Atonement and the Incarnation and the Resurrection. . . .'

'Oh yes—I *used* to, at least. I used to have to learn the Catechism on Sundays—mamma made me. Whatever her faults and mistakes were, poor mamma was always very particular about *that!* It all seemed very complicated. But papa told me not to bother too much about it, but to be good. He said that God would make it all right for us somehow, in the end—all of us. And that seems sensible, *doesn't* it?

'He told me to be good, and not to mind what priests and clergymen tell us. He'd been a clergyman himself, and knew all about it, he said.

'I haven't been very good—there's not much doubt about that, I'm afraid! But God knows I've repented often enough and sore enough; I do now! But I'm rather glad to die, I think; and not a bit afraid—not a

scrap! I believe in poor papa, though he *was* so unfortunate! He was the cleverest man I ever knew, and the best—except Taffy and the Laird and your dear son!

'There'll be no hell for any of us—he told me so—except what we make for ourselves and each other down here; and that's bad enough for anything. He told me that *he* was responsible for me—he often said so—and that mamma was too, and his parents for *him*, and his grandfathers and grandmothers for *them*, and so on up to Noah and ever so far beyond, and God for us all!

'He told me always to think of other people before myself; as Taffy does, and your son; and never to tell lies or be afraid, and keep away from drink, and I should be all right. But I've sometimes been all wrong, all the same; and it wasn't papa's fault, but poor mamma's and mine; and I've known it, and been miserable at the time, and after!

and I'm sure to be forgiven—perfectly certain—and so will everybody else, even the wickedest that ever lived! Why, just give them sense enough in the next world to understand all their wickedness in this, and that'll punish them enough for anything, I think! That's simple enough, *isn't* it? Besides, there may be *no* next world—that's on the cards too, you know!—and that will be simpler still!

'Not all the clergymen in all the world, not even the Pope of Rome, will ever make me doubt papa, or believe in any punishment after what we've all got to go through here! *Ce serait trop bête!*

'So that if you don't want me to very much, and he won't think it unkind, I'd rather not talk to Mr. Thomas Bagot about it. I'd rather talk to Taffy if I *must*. He's very clever, Taffy, though he doesn't often say such clever things as your son does, or

paint nearly so well; and I'm sure he'll think papa was right.'

And as a matter of fact the good Taffy, in his opinion on this solemn subject, was found to be at one with the late Reverend Patrick Michael O'Ferrall—and so was the Laird—and so (to his mother's shocked and pained surprise) was Little Billee.

And so were Sir Oliver Calthorpe and Sir Jakes (then Mr.) Talboys and Doctor Thorne and Antony and Lorrimer and the Greek!

And so—in after-years, when grief had well pierced and torn and riddled her through and through, and time and age had healed the wounds, and nothing remained but the consciousness of great inward scars of recollection to remind her how deep and jagged and wide the wounds had once been—did Mrs. Bagot herself!

Late on one memorable Saturday after-

noon, just as it was getting dusk in Charlotte Street, Trilby, in her pretty blue dressing-gown, lay on the sofa by the fire—her head well propped, her knees drawn up—looking very placid and content.

She had spent the early part of the day dictating her will to the conscientious Taffy.

It was a simple document, although she was not without many valuable trinkets to leave: quite a fortune! Souvenirs from many men and women she had charmed by her singing, from royalties downward.

She had been looking them over with the faithful Marta, to whom she had always thought they belonged. It was explained to her that they were gifts of Svengali's; since she did not remember when and where and by whom they were presented to her, except a few that Svengali had given her himself, with many passionate expressions of his love, which seems to have been deep and constant

and sincere ; none the less so, perhaps, that she could never return it !

She had left the bulk of these to the faithful Marta.

But to each of the *trois Angliches* she had bequeathed a beautiful ring, which was to be worn by their brides if they ever married, and the brides didn't object.

To Mrs. Bagot she left a pearl necklace ; to Miss Bagot her gold coronet of stars ; and pretty (and most costly) gifts to each of the three doctors who had attended her and been so assiduous in their care ; and who, as she was told, would make no charge for attending on Madame Svengali. And studs and scarf-pins to Antony, Lorrimer, the Greek, Dodor, and Zouzou ; and to Carnegie a little German-silver vinaigrette which had once belonged to Lord Witlow ; and pretty souvenirs to the Vinards, Angèle Boisse, Durien, and others.

And she left a magnificent gold watch and chain to Gecko, with a most affectionate letter and a hundred pounds —which was all she had in money of her own.

She had taken great interest in discussing with Taffy the particular kind of trinket which would best suit the idiosyncrasy of each particular legatee, and derived great comfort from the business-like and sympathetic conscientiousness with which the good Taffy entered upon all these minutiæ—he was so solemn and serious about it, and took such pains. She little guessed how his dumb but deeply feeling heart was harrowed!

This document had been duly signed and witnessed and entrusted to his care; and Trilby lay tranquil and happy, and with a sense that nothing remained for her but to enjoy the fleeting hour, and make the most of each precious moment as it went by.

She was quite without pain of either mind

or body, and surrounded by the people she adored—Taffy, the Laird, and Little Billee, and Mrs. Bagot, and Marta, who sat knitting in a corner with her black mittens on, and her brass spectacles.

She listened to the chat and joined in it, laughing as usual; 'love in her eyes sat playing' as she looked from one to another, for she loved them all beyond expression. 'Love on her lips was straying, and warbling in her breath,' whenever she spoke; and her weakened voice was still larger, fuller, softer than any other voice in the room, in the world—of another kind, from another sphere.

A cart drove up, there was a ring at the door, and presently a wooden packing-case was brought into the room.

At Trilby's request it was opened, and found to contain a large photograph, framed and glazed, of Svengali, in the military uniform of his own Hungarian band (which

he had always worn until he came to Paris and London, where he conducted in ordinary evening dress), and looking straight out of the picture, straight at you. He was standing by his desk with his left hand turning over a leaf of music, and waving his bâton with his right. It was a splendid photograph, by a Viennese photographer, and a most speaking likeness; and Svengali looked truly fine—all made up of importance and authority, and his big black eyes were full of stern command.

Marta trembled as she looked. It was handed to Trilby, who exclaimed in surprise. She had never seen it. She had no photograph of him, and had never possessed one.

No message of any kind, no letter of explanation, accompanied this unexpected present, which, from the postmarks on the case, seemed to have travelled all over Europe to London, out of some remote province in eastern Russia—out of the mysterious East!

The poisonous East—birthplace and home of an ill wind that blows nobody good.

Trilby laid it against her legs as on a lectern, and lay gazing at it with close attention for a long time, making a casual remark now and then, as, 'He was very handsome, I think'; or, 'That uniform becomes him very well. Why has he got it on, I wonder?'

The others went on talking, and Mrs. Bagot made coffee.

Presently Mrs. Bagot took a cup of coffee to Trilby, and found her still staring intently at the portrait, but with her eyes dilated, and quite a strange light in them.

'Trilby, Trilby, your coffee! What is the matter, Trilby?'

Trilby was smiling, with fixed eyes, and made no answer.

The others got up and gathered round her in some alarm. Marta seemed terror-stricken, and wished to snatch the photograph

away, but was prevented from doing so; one didn't know what the consequences might be.

Taffy rang the bell, and sent a servant for Dr. Thorne, who lived close by, in Fitzroy Square.

Presently Trilby began to speak, quite softly, in French: 'Encore une fois? bon! je veux bien! avec la voix blanche alors, n'est-ce pas? et puis foncer au milieu. Et pas trop vite en commençant! Battez bien la mesure, Svengali—que je puisse bien voir—car il fait déjà nuit! c'est ça! Allons, Gecko—donne-moi le ton!'

Then she smiled, and seemed to beat time softly by moving her head a little from side to side, her eyes intent on Svengali's in the portrait, and suddenly she began to sing Chopin's Impromptu in A flat.

She hardly seemed to breathe as the notes came pouring out, without words — mere vocalising. It was as if breath were un-

necessary for so little voice as she was using, though there was enough of it to fill the room—to fill the house—to drown her small audience in holy, heavenly sweetness.

She was a consummate mistress of her art. How that could be seen! And also how splendid had been her training. It all seemed as easy to her as opening and shutting her eyes, and yet how utterly impossible to anybody else!

Between wonder, enchantment, and alarm they were frozen to statues — all except Marta, who ran out of the room crying, 'Gott im Himmel! wieder zurück! wieder zurück!'

She sang it just as she had sung it at the Salle des Bashibazoucks, only it sounded still more ineffably seductive, as she was using less voice—using the essence of her voice, in fact — the pure spirit, the very cream of it.

There can be little doubt that these four watchers by that enchanted couch were listening to not only the most divinely beautiful, but also the most astounding feat of musical utterance ever heard out of a human throat.

The usual effect was produced. Tears were streaming down the cheeks of Mrs. Bagot and Little Billee. Tears were in the Laird's eyes, a tear on one of Taffy's whiskers—tears of sheer delight.

When she came back to the quick movement again, after the adagio, her voice grew louder and shriller, and sweet with a sweetness not of this earth; and went on increasing in volume as she quickened the time, nearing the end; and then came the dying away into all but nothing—a mere melodic breath; and then the little soft chromatic ascending rocket, up to E in alt, the last parting caress (which Svengali had

introduced as a finale, for it does not exist in the piano score).

When it was over, she said: 'Ça y est-il, cette fois, Svengali? Ah! tant mieux, à la fin! c'est pas malheureux! Et maintenant, mon ami, *je suis fatiguée—bon soir!*'

Her head fell back on the pillow, and she lay fast asleep.

Mrs. Bagot took the portrait away gently. Little Billee knelt down and held Trilby's hand in his and felt for her pulse, and could not find it.

He said, 'Trilby! Trilby!' and put his ear to her mouth to hear her breathe. Her breath was inaudible.

But soon she folded her hands across her breast, and uttered a little short sigh, and in a weak voice said: '*Svengali* . . . *Svengali* . . . *Svengali* . . .'

They remained in silence round her for several minutes, terror-stricken.

The doctor came; he put his hand to her heart, his ear to her lips. He turned up one of her eyelids and looked at her eye. And then, his voice quivering with strong emotion, he stood up and said, 'Madame Svengali's trials and sufferings are all over!'

'Oh, good God! is she *dead?*' cried Mrs. Bagot.

'Yes, Mrs. Bagot. She has been dead several minutes—perhaps a quarter of an hour.'

VINGT ANS APRÈS

Porthos-Athos, *alias* Taffy Wynne, is sitting to breakfast (opposite his wife) at a little table in the courtyard of that huge caravansérai on the Boulevard des Italiens, Paris, where he had sat more than twenty years ago with the Laird and Little Billee; where, in fact, he had pulled Svengali's nose.

Little is changed in the aspect of the

place: the same cosmopolite company, with more of the American element, perhaps; the same arrivals and departures in railway omnibuses, cabs, hired carriages; and, to welcome the coming and speed the parting guests, just such another colossal and beautiful old man in velvet and knee-breeches and silk stockings as of yore, with probably the very same gold chain. Where do they breed these magnificent old Frenchmen? In Germany, perhaps, 'where all the good big waiters come from!'

And also the same fine weather. It is always fine weather in the courtyard of the Grand Hôtel. As the Laird would say, they manage these things better there!

Taffy wears a short beard, which is turning gray. His kind blue eye is no longer choleric, but mild and friendly—as frank as ever; and full of humorous patience. He has grown stouter; he is very big

indeed, in all three dimensions, but the symmetry and the gainliness of the athlete belong to him still in movement and repose; and his clothes fit him beautifully, though they are not new, and show careful beating and brushing and ironing, and even a faint suspicion of all but imperceptible fine-drawing here and there.

What a magnificent old man *he* will make some day, should the Grand Hôtel ever run short of them! He looks as if he could be trusted down to the ground—in all things, little or big; as if his word were as good as his bond, and even better; his wink as good as his word, his nod as good as his wink; and, in truth, as he looks, so he is.

The most cynical disbeliever in 'the grand old name of gentleman,' and its virtues as a noun of definition, would almost be justified in quite dogmatically asserting at sight, and without even being introduced,

that, at all events, Taffy is a 'gentleman,' inside and out, up and down — from the crown of his head (which is getting rather bald) to the sole of his foot (by no means a small one, or a lightly shod—*ex pede Herculem*)!

Indeed, this is always the first thing people say of Taffy — and the last. It means, perhaps, that he may be a trifle dull. Well, one can't be everything!

Porthos was a trifle dull—and so was Athos, I think; and likewise his son, the faithful Viscount of Bragelonne—*bon chien chasse de race!* And so was Wilfred of Ivanhoe, the disinherited; and Edgar, the Lord of Ravenswood! and so, for that matter, was Colonel Newcome, of immortal memory!

Yet who does not love them—who would not wish to be like them, for better, for worse!

Taffy's wife is unlike Taffy in many ways; but (fortunately for both) very like him in some. She is a little woman, very well shaped, very dark, with black, wavy hair, and very small hands and feet; a very graceful, handsome, and vivacious person; by no means dull; full, indeed, of quick perceptions and intuitions; deeply interested in all that is going on about and around her, and with always lots to say about it, but not too much.

She distinctly belongs to the rare, and ever-blessed, and most precious race of charmers.

She had fallen in love with the stalwart Taffy more than a quarter of a century ago in the Place St. Anatole des Arts, where he and she and her mother had tended the sick couch of Little Billee—but she had never told her love. *Tout vient à point, à qui sait attendre!*

That is a capital proverb, and sometimes even a true one. Blanche Bagot had found it to be both!

One terrible night, never to be forgotten, Taffy lay fast asleep in bed, at his rooms in Jermyn Street, for he was very tired; grief tires more than anything, and brings a deeper slumber.

That day he had followed Trilby to her last home in Kensal Green, with Little Billee, Mrs. Bagot, the Laird, Antony, the Greek, and Durien (who had come over from Paris on purpose) as chief mourners; and very many other people, noble, famous, or otherwise, English and foreign; a splendid and most representative gathering, as was duly chronicled in all the newspapers here and abroad; a fitting ceremony to close the brief but splendid career of the greatest pleasure-giver of our time.

He was awakened by a tremendous ringing at the street-door bell, as if the house were on fire; and then there was a hurried scrambling up in the dark, a tumbling over stairs and kicking against banisters, and Little Billee had burst into his room, calling out: 'Oh! Taffy, Taffy! I'm g-going mad —I'm g-going m-mad! I'm d-d-done for. . . .'

'All right, old fellow—just wait till I strike a light!'

'Oh, Taffy! I haven't slept for four nights—not a wink! She d-d-died with Sv—Sv—Sv . . . damn it, I can't get it out! that ruffian's name on her lips! . . . it was just as if he were calling her from the t-t-tomb! She recovered her senses the very minute she saw his photograph—she was so f-fond of him she f-forgot everybody else! She's gone straight to him, after all —in some other life! . . . to slave for him, and sing for him, and help him to make

better music than ever! Oh, T—T—oh—oh! Taffy—oh! oh! oh! catch hold! c-c-catch. . . .' And Little Billee had all but fallen on the floor in a fit.

And all the old miserable business of five years before had begun over again!

There has been too much sickness in this story, so I will tell as little as possible of poor Little Billee's long illness, his slow and only partial recovery, the paralysis of his powers as a painter, his quick decline, his early death, his manly, calm, and most beautiful surrender—the wedding of the moth with the star, of the night with the morrow!

For all but blameless as his short life had been, and so full of splendid promise and performance, nothing ever became him better than the way he left it. It was as if he were starting on some distant holy quest, like some gallant knight of old—'A Bagot to the rescue!' in

another life. It shook the infallibility of a certain vicar down to its very foundations, and made him think more deeply about things than he had ever thought yet. It gave him pause! . . . and so wrung his heart that when, at the last, he stooped to kiss his poor young dead friend's pure white forehead, he dropped a bigger tear on it than Little Billee (once so given to the dropping of big tears) had ever dropped in his life.

But it is all too sad to write about.

It was by Little Billee's bedside, in Devonshire, that Taffy had grown to love Blanche Bagot, and not very many weeks after it was all over that Taffy had asked her to be his wife; and in a year they were married, and a very happy marriage it turned out—the one thing that poor Mrs. Bagot still looks upon as a compensation for all the griefs and troubles of her life.

During the first year or two Blanche had

perhaps been the most ardently loving of this well-assorted pair. That beautiful look of love surprised (which makes all women's eyes look the same) came into hers whenever she looked at Taffy, and filled his heart with tender compunction, and a queer sense of his own unworthiness.

Then a boy was born to them, and that look fell on the boy, and the good Taffy caught it as it passed him by, and he felt a helpless, absurd jealousy, that was none the less painful for being so ridiculous! and then that look fell on another boy, and yet another, so that it was through these boys that she looked at their father. Then *his* eyes caught the look, and kept it for their own use; and he grew never to look at his wife without it; and as no daughter came, she retained for life the monopoly of that most sweet and expressive regard.

They are not very rich. He is a far

better sportsman than he will ever be a painter; and if he doesn't sell his pictures, it is not because they are too good for the public taste: indeed, he has no illusions on that score himself, even if his wife has! He is quite the least conceited art-duffer I ever met—and I have met many far worse duffers than Taffy.

Would only that I might kill off his cousin Sir Oscar, and Sir Oscar's five sons (the Wynnes are good at sons), and his seventeen grandsons, and the fourteen cousins (and their numerous male progeny), that stand between Taffy and the baronetcy, and whatever property goes with it; so that he might be Sir Taffy, and dear Blanche Bagot (that was) might be called 'my lady'! This Shakespearian holocaust would scarcely cost me a pang!

It is a great temptation, when you have duly slain your first hero, to enrich hero

number two beyond the dreams of avarice, and provide him with a title and a castle and park, as well as a handsome wife and a nice family! But truth is inexorable — and, besides, they are just as happy as they are.

They are well off enough, anyhow, to spend a week in Paris at last, and even to stop at the Grand Hôtel! now that two of their sons are at Harrow (where their father was before them), and the third is safe at a preparatory school at Elstree, Herts.

It is their first outing since the honeymoon, and the Laird should have come with them.

But the good Laird of Cockpen (who is now a famous Royal Academician) is preparing for a honeymoon of his own. He has gone to Scotland to be married himself—to wed a fair and clever countrywoman of just a suitable age, for he has known her ever since she was a bright little lassie in short

frocks, and he a promising A.R.A. (the pride of his native Dundee)—a marriage of reason, and well-seasoned affection, and mutual esteem—and therefore sure to turn out a happy one! and in another fortnight or so the pair of them will very possibly be sitting to breakfast opposite each other at that very corner table in the courtyard of the Grand Hôtel! and she will laugh at everything he says—and they will live happily ever after.

So much for hero number three—D'Artagnan! Here's to you, Sandy M'Allister, canniest, genialest, and most humorous of Scots! most delicate, and dainty, and fanciful of British painters! 'I trink your health, mit your family's—may you lif long—and brosper!'

So Taffy and his wife have come for their second honeymoon, their Indian-summer

honeymoon, alone; and are well content that it should be so. Two's always company for such a pair—the amusing one and the amusable!—and they are making the most of it!

They have been all over the Quartier Latin, and revisited the well-remembered spots; and even been allowed to enter the old studio, through the kindness of the *concierge* (who is no longer Madame Vinard). It is tenanted by two American painters, who are coldly civil on being thus disturbed in the middle of their work.

The studio is very spick and span, and most respectable. Trilby's foot, and the poem, and the sheet of plate-glass have been improved away, and a bookshelf put in their place. The new *concierge* (who has only been there a year) knows nothing of Trilby; and of the Vinards, only that they are rich and prosperous, and live somewhere in the

south of France, and that Monsieur Vinard is mayor of his commune. *Que le bon Dieu les bénisse! c'étaient de bien braves gens.*

Then Mr. and Mrs. Taffy have also been driven (in an open *calèche* with two horses) through the Bois de Boulogne to St. Cloud; and to Versailles, where they lunched at the Hôtel des Réservoirs—*parlez-moi de ça!* and to St. Germain, and to Meudon (where they lunched at *la loge du garde champêtre*—a new one); they have visited the Salon, the Louvre, the porcelain manufactory at Sèvres, the Gobelins, the Hôtel Cluny, the Invalides, with Napoleon's tomb; and seen half a dozen churches, including Notre Dame and the Sainte Chapelle; and dined with the Dodors at their charming villa near Asnières, and with the Zouzous at the splendid Hôtel de la Rochemartel, and with the Duriens in the Parc Monceau (Dodor's food was best and

Zouzou's worst; and at Durien's the company and talk were so good that one forgot to notice the food—and that was a pity). And the young Dodors are all right—and so are the young Duriens. As for the young Zouzous, there aren't any — and *that's* a weight off one's mind!

And they've been to the Variétés and seen Madame Chaumont, and to the Français and seen Sarah Bernhardt and Coquelin and Delaunay, and to the Opéra and heard Monsieur Lassalle.

And to-day being their last day, they are going to laze and flane about the boulevards, and buy things, and lunch anywhere, *sur le pouce*, and do the Bois once more and see *tout* Paris, and dine early at Durand's, or Bignon's (or else the Café des Ambassadeurs), and finish up the well-spent day at the 'Mouches d'Espagne'—the new theatre in the Boulevard Poissonnière — to see

Madame Cantharidi in 'Petits Bonheurs de Contrebande,' which they are told is immensely droll and quite proper — funny without being vulgar! Dodor was their informant—he had taken Madame Dodor to see it three or four times.

Madame Cantharidi, as everybody knows, is a very clever but extremely plain old woman with a cracked voice—of spotless reputation, and the irreproachable mother of a grown-up family whom she has brought up in perfection. They have never been allowed to see their mother (and grandmother) act — not even the sons. Their excellent father (who adores both them and her) has drawn the line at that!

In private life she is 'quite the lady,' but on the stage—well, go and see her, and you will understand how she comes to be the idol of the Parisian public. For she is the true and liberal dispenser to them of that

modern *esprit gaulois* which would make the good Rabelais turn uneasily in his grave and blush there like a Benedictine Sister.

And truly she deserves the reverential love and gratitude of her *chers Parisiens!* She amused them all through the Empire; during the *année terrible* she was their only stay and comfort, and has been their chief delight ever since, and is now.

When they come back from *La Revanche*, may Madame Cantharidi be still at her post, 'Les mouches d'Espagne,' to welcome the returning heroes, and exult and crow with them in her funny cracked old voice; or, haply, even console them once more, as the case may be.

'Victors or vanquished, they will laugh the same!'

Mrs. Taffy is a poor French scholar. One must know French very well indeed (and many other things besides) to seize the

subtle points of Madame Cantharidi's play (and by-play)!

But Madame Cantharidi has so droll a face and voice, and such very droll, odd movements, that Mrs. Taffy goes into fits of laughter as soon as the quaint little old lady comes on the stage. So heartily does she laugh that a good Parisian bourgeois turns round and remarks to his wife: 'V'là une jolie p'tite Anglaise qui n'est pas bégueule, au moins! Et l' gros bœuf avec les yeux bleus en boules de loto—c'est son mari, sans doute! il n'a pas l'air trop content par exemple, celui-là!'

The fact is that the good Taffy (who knows French very well indeed) is quite scandalised, and very angry with Dodor for sending them there; and as soon as the first act is finished he means, without any fuss, to take his wife away.

As he sits patiently, too indignant to

laugh at what is really funny in the piece (much of it is vulgar *without* being funny), he finds himself watching a little white-haired man in the orchestra, a fiddler, the shape of whose back seems somehow familiar, as he plays an *obbligato* accompaniment to a very broadly comic song of Madame Cantharidi's. He plays beautifully — like a master — and the loud applause is as much for him as for the vocalist.

Presently this fiddler turns his head so that his profile can be seen, and Taffy recognises him.

After five minutes' thought, Taffy takes a leaf out of his pocket-book and writes (in perfectly grammatical French) :—

'Dear Gecko—You have not forgotten Taffy Wynne, I hope; and Litrebili, and Litrebili's sister, who is now Mrs. Taffy Wynne. We leave Paris to-morrow, and would like very much to see you once

more. Will you, after the play, come and sup with us at the Café Anglais? If so, look up and make "yes" with the head, and enchant

'Your well-devoted

'TAFFY WYNNE.'

He gives this, folded, to an attendant—for 'le premier violon—celui qui a des cheveux blancs.'

Presently he sees Gecko receive the note and read it and ponder for a while.

Then Gecko looks round the theatre, and Taffy waves his handkerchief and catches the eye of the premier violon, who 'makes "yes" with the head.'

And then, the first act over, Mr. and Mrs. Wynne leave the theatre; Mr. explaining why, and Mrs. very ready to go, as she was beginning to feel strangely uncomfortable without quite realising as yet what

was amiss with the lively Madame Cantharidi.

They went to the Café Anglais and bespoke a nice little room on the *entresol* overlooking the boulevard, and ordered a nice little supper; salmi of something very good, mayonnaise of lobster, and one or two other dishes better still—and chambertin of the best. Taffy was particular about these things on a holiday, and regardless of expense. Porthos was very hospitable, and liked good food and plenty of it; and Athos dearly loved good wine!

And then they went and sat at a little round table outside the western corner café on the boulevard, near the Grand Opéra, where it is always very gay, and studied Paris life, and nursed their appetites till supper-time.

At half-past eleven Gecko made his appearance — very meek and humble. He looked old—ten years older than he really

was—much bowed down, and as if he had roughed it all his life, and had found living a desperate long, hard grind.

He kissed Mrs. Taffy's hand, and seemed half inclined to kiss Taffy's too, and was almost tearful in his pleasure at meeting them again, and his gratitude at being asked to sup with them. He had soft, clinging, caressing manners, like a nice dog's, that made you his friend at once. He was obviously genuine and sincere, and quite pathetically simple, as he always had been.

At first he could scarcely eat for nervous excitement; but Taffy's fine example and Mrs. Taffy's genial, easy-going cordiality (and a couple of glasses of chambertin) soon put him at his ease and woke up his dormant appetite, which was a very large one, poor fellow!

He was told all about Little Billee's death, and deeply moved to hear the cause

which had brought it about, and then they talked of Trilby.

He pulled her watch out of his waistcoat-pocket and reverently kissed it, exclaiming: 'Ah! c'était un ange! un ange du Paradis! when I tell you I lived with them for five years! Oh! her kindness, Dio, Dio Maria! It was "Gecko this!" and "Gecko that!" and "Poor Gecko, your toothache, how it worries me!" and "Gecko, how tired and pale you look—you distress me so, looking like that! Shall I mix you a maitrank?" And "Gecko, you love artichokes à la Barigoule; they remind you of Paris—I have heard you say so. Well, I have found out where to get artichokes, and I know how to do them à la Barigoule, and you shall have them for dinner to-day and to-morrow and all the week after!" and we did!

'Ach! dear kind one—what did I really care for artichokes à la Barigoule? . . .

'And it was always like that—always—and to Svengali and old Marta just the same! and she was never well — never! *toujours souffrante!*

'And it was she who supported us all—in luxury and splendour sometimes!'

'And *what* an artist!' said Taffy.

'Ah, yes! but all that was Svengali, you know. Svengali was the greatest artist I ever met! Monsieur, Svengali was a demon, a magician! I used to think him a god! He found me playing in the streets for copper coins, and took me by the hand, and was my only friend, and taught me all I ever knew—and yet he could not play my instrument!

'And now he is dead, I have forgotten how to play it myself! That English jail! it demoralised me, ruined me for ever! ach! quel enfer, nom de Dieu (pardon, madame)! I am just good enough to play the *obbligato*

at the Mouches d'Espagne, when the old Cantharidi sings,

> ' "V'là mon mari qui r'garde !'
> Prends garde—ne m'chatouille plus !"

'It does not want much of an *obbligato*, *hein*, a song so noble and so beautiful as that!

'And that song, monsieur, all Paris is singing it now. And that is the Paris that went mad when Trilby sang the "Nussbaum" of Schumann at the Salle des Bashibazoucks. You heard her? Well!'

And here poor Gecko tried to laugh a little sardonic laugh in falsetto, like Svengali's, full of scorn and bitterness—and very nearly succeeded.

'But what made you strike him with—with that knife, you know?'

'Ah, monsieur, it had been coming on for a long time. He used to work Trilby too hard; it was killing her—it killed her at

last! And then at the end he was unkind to her and scolded her and called her names —horrid names—and then one day in London he struck her. He struck her on the fingers with his bâton, and she fell down on her knees and cried. . . .

'Monsieur, I would have defended Trilby against a locomotive going *grande vitesse!* against my own father—against the Emperor of Austria—against the Pope! and I am a good Catholic, monsieur! I would have gone to the scaffold for her, and to the devil after!'

And he piously crossed himself.

'But, Svengali—wasn't *he* very fond of her?'

'Oh yes, monsieur! *quant à ça*, passionately! But she did not love him as he wished to be loved. She loved Litrebili, monsieur! Litrebili, the brother of madame. And I suppose that Svengali grew angry

and jealous at last. He changed as soon as he came to Paris. Perhaps Paris reminded him of Litrebili—and reminded Trilby, too!'

'But how on earth did Svengali ever manage to teach her how to sing like that? She had no ear for music whatever when *we* knew her!'

Gecko was silent for a while, and Taffy filled his glass, and gave him a cigar, and lit one himself.

'Monsieur, no—that is true. She had not much ear. But she had such a voice as had never been heard. Svengali knew that. He had found it out long ago. Litolff had found it out, too. One day Svengali heard Litolff tell Meyerbeer that the most beautiful female voice in Europe belonged to an English grisette who sat as a model to sculptors in the Quartier Latin, but that unfortunately she was quite tone-deaf, and couldn't sing one single note in tune.

Imagine how Svengali chuckled! I see it from here!

'Well, we both taught her together—for three years—morning, noon, and night—six—eight hours a day. It used to split me the heart to see her worked like that! We took her voice note by note—there was no end to her notes, each more beautiful than the other—velvet and gold, beautiful flowers, pearls, diamonds, rubies—drops of dew and honey; peaches, oranges, and lemons! *en veux-tu en voilà!*—all the perfumes and spices of the Garden of Eden! Svengali with his little flexible flageolet, I with my violin—that is how we taught her to make the sounds—and then how to use them. She was a *phénomène*, monsieur! She could keep on one note and make it go through all the colours in the rainbow—according to the way Svengali looked at her. It would make you laugh—it would make

you cry — but, cry or laugh, it was the sweetest, the most touching, the most beautiful note you ever heard — except all her others! and each had as many overtones as the bells in the Carillon de Notre Dame. She could run up and down the scales, chromatic scales, quicker and better and smoother than Svengali on the piano, and more in tune than any piano! and her shake —*ach!* twin stars, monsieur! She was the greatest contralto, the greatest soprano the world has ever known! the like of her has never been! the like of her will never be again! and yet she only sang in public for two years!

'*Ach!* those breaks and runs and sudden leaps from darkness into light and back again —from earth to heaven! . . . those slurs and swoops and slides à la Paganini from one note to another, like a swallow flying! . . . or a gull! Do you remember them? how

they drove you mad? Let any other singer in the world try to imitate them—they would make you sick! That was Svengali . . . he was a magician!

'And how she looked, singing! do you remember? her hands behind her—her dear, sweet, slender foot on a little stool—her thick hair lying down all along her back! And that good smile like the Madonna's, so soft and bright and kind! *Ach! Bel ucel di Dio!* it was to make you weep for love, merely to see her (*c'était à vous faire pleurer d'amour, rien que de la voir*)! That was Trilby! Nightingale and bird of paradise in one!

'*Enfin* she could do anything—utter any sound she liked, when once Svengali had shown her how—and he was the greatest master that ever lived! and when once she knew a thing, she knew it. *Et voilà!*'

'How strange,' said Taffy, 'that she

should have suddenly gone out of her senses that night at Drury Lane, and so completely forgotten it all! I suppose she saw Svengali die in the box opposite, and that drove her mad!'

And then Taffy told the little fiddler about Trilby's death-song, like a swan's, and Svengali's photograph. But Gecko had heard it all from Marta, who was now dead.

Gecko sat and smoked and pondered for a while, and looked from one to the other. Then he pulled himself together with an effort, so to speak, and said, 'Monsieur, she never went mad—not for one moment!'

'What? Do you mean to say she *deceived* us all?'

'Non, monsieur! She could never deceive anybody, and never would. *She had forgotten—voilà tout!*'

'But hang it all, my friend, one doesn't *forget* such a——'

'Monsieur, listen! She is dead. And Svengali is dead—and Marta also. And I have a good little malady that will kill me soon, *Gott sei dank*—and without much pain.

'I will tell you a secret.

'*There were two Trilbys.* There was the Trilby you knew, who could not sing one single note in tune. She was an angel of paradise. She is now! But she had no more idea of singing than I have of winning a steeple-chase at the croix de Berny. She could no more sing than a fiddle can play itself! She could never tell one tune from another—one note from the next. Do you remember how she tried to sing "Ben Bolt" that day when she first came to the studio in the Place St. Anatole des Arts? It was droll, *hein? à se boucher les oreilles!* Well, that was Trilby, your Trilby! that was my Trilby too—and I loved her as one loves an only love, an only sister, an only child—a

gentle martyr on earth, a blessed saint in heaven! And that Trilby was enough for *me!*

'And that was the Trilby that loved your brother, madame—oh! but with all the love that was in her! He did not know what he had lost, your brother! Her love, it was immense, like her voice, and just as full of celestial sweetness and sympathy! She told me everything! *ce pauvre Litrebili, ce qu'il a perdu!*

'But all at once—pr-r-r-out! presto! *augenblick!* . . . with one wave of his hand over her—with one look of his eye—with a word—Svengali could turn her into the other Trilby, *his* Trilby—and make her do whatever he liked . . . you might have run a red-hot needle into her and she would not have felt it. . . .

'He had but to say "*Dors!*" and she suddenly became an unconscious Trilby of

marble, who could produce wonderful sounds —just the sounds he wanted, and nothing else—and think his thoughts and wish his wishes—and love him at his bidding with a strange, unreal, factitious love . . . just his own love for himself turned inside out—*à l'envers*—and reflected back on him, as from a mirror . . . *un écho, un simulacre, quoi! pas autre chose!* . . . It was not worth having! I was not even jealous!

'Well, that was the Trilby he taught how to sing—and—and I helped him, God of heaven forgive me! That Trilby was just a singing-machine—an organ to play upon—an instrument of music—a Stradivarius—a flexible flageolet of flesh and blood—a voice, and nothing more—just the unconscious voice that Svengali sang with—for it takes two to sing like La Svengali, monsieur—the one who has got the voice, and the one who knows what to do with it. . . . So that when you heard

her sing the "Nussbaum," the "Impromptu," you heard Svengali singing with her voice, just as you hear Joachim play a *chaconne* of Bach with his fiddle! . . . Herr Joachim's fiddle . . . what does it know of Sebastian Bach? and as for *chaconnes* . . . *il s'en moque pas mal, ce fameux violon!* . . .

'And *our* Trilby . . . what did she know of Schumann, Chopin?—nothing at all! She mocked herself not badly of Nussbaums and Impromptus . . . they would make her yawn to demantibulate her jaws! . . . When Svengali's Trilby was being taught to sing . . . when Svengali's Trilby was singing—or seemed to *you* as if she were singing—*our* Trilby had ceased to exist . . . *our* Trilby was fast asleep . . . in fact, *our* Trilby was *dead*. . . .

'Ah, monsieur . . . that Trilby of Svengali's! I have heard her sing to kings and queens in royal palaces! . . . as no

woman has ever sung before or since. . . . I have seen emperors and grand-dukes kiss her hand, monsieur—and their wives and daughters kiss her lips, and weep. . . .

'I have seen the horses taken out of her sledge and the pick of the nobility drag her home to the hotel . . . with torchlights and choruses and shoutings of glory and long life to her! . . . and serenades all night, under her window! . . . *she* never knew! she heard nothing—felt nothing—saw nothing! and she bowed to them, right and left, like a queen!

'I have played the fiddle for her while she sang in the streets, at fairs and festas and Kermessen . . . and seen the people go mad to hear her . . . and once, at Prague, Svengali fell down in a fit from sheer excitement! and then, suddenly, *our* Trilby woke up and wondered what it was all about . . . and we took him home and put him to bed and left him with Marta—and Trilby and I

went together arm-in-arm all over the town to fetch a doctor and buy things for supper—and that was the happiest hour in all my life!

'*Ach!* what an existence! what travels! what triumphs! what adventures! Things to fill a book—a dozen books— Those five happy years—with those two Trilbys! what recollections! . . . I think of nothing else, night or day . . . even as I play the fiddle for old Cantharidi. *Ach!* . . . To think how often I have played the fiddle for La Svengali . . . to have done that is to have lived . . . and then to come home to Trilby . . . *our* Trilby . . . the *real* Trilby! . . . Gott sei dank! Ich habe *geliebt und gelebet! geliebt und gelebet! geliebt und gelebet!* Cristo di Dio . . . Sweet sister in heaven . . . Ô Dieu de Misère, ayez pitié de nous. . . .'

His eyes were red, and his voice was high and shrill and tremulous and full of tears;

these remembrances were too much for him; and perhaps also the chambertin! He put his elbows on the table and hid his face in his hands and wept, muttering to himself in his own language (whatever that might have been —Polish, probably) as if he were praying.

Taffy and his wife got up and leaned on the window-bar and looked out on the deserted boulevards, where an army of scavengers, noiseless and taciturn, was cleansing the asphalt roadway. The night above was dark, but 'star-dials hinted of morn,' and a fresh breeze had sprung up, making the leaves dance and rustle on the sycamore trees along the boulevard—a nice little breeze; just the sort of little breeze to do Paris good. A four-wheel cab came by at a foot pace, the driver humming a tune; Taffy hailed him; he said, 'V'là, m'sieur!' and drew up.

Taffy rang the bell, and asked for the bill,

and paid it. Gecko had apparently fallen asleep. Taffy gently woke him up, and told him how late it was. The poor little man seemed dazed and rather tipsy, and looked older than ever; sixty, seventy—any age you like. Taffy helped him on with his great-coat, and taking him by the arm, led him downstairs, giving him his card, and telling him how glad he was to have seen him, and that he would write to him from England—a promise that was kept, one may be sure.

Gecko uncovered his fuzzy white head, and took Mrs. Taffy's hand and kissed it, and thanked her warmly for her 'si bon et sympathique accueil.'

Then Taffy all but lifted him into the cab, the jolly cabman saying—

'Ah! bon—connais bien, celui là; vous savez — c'est lui qui joue du violon aux Mouches d'Espagne! Il a soupé, l'bourgeois; n'est-ce pas, m'sieur? "petits bonheurs

de contrebande," hein? . . . ayez pas peur! on vous aura soin de lui! il joue joliment bien, m'sieur; n'est-ce pas?'

Taffy shook Gecko's hand, and asked,

'Où restez-vous, Gecko?'

'Quarante-huit Rue des Pousse-cailloux, au cinquième.'

'How strange!' said Taffy to his wife—'how touching! why, that's where Trilby used to live—the very number! the very floor!'

'Oui, oui,' said Gecko, waking up; 'c'est l'ancienne mansarde à Trilby—j'y suis depuis douze ans—*j'y suis, j'y reste. . . .*'

And he laughed feebly at his mild little joke.

Taffy told the address to the cabman, and gave him five francs.

'Merci, m'sieur! C'est de l'aut' côté de l'eau—près de la Sorbonne, s'pas? On vous aura soin du bourgeois; soyez tranquille—

ayez pas peur! quarante-huit; on y va! Bonsoir, monsieur et dame!' And he clacked his whip and rattled away, singing:—

'V'là mon mari qui r'garde—
Prends garde!
Ne m'chatouill' plus!'

Mr. and Mrs. Wynne walked back to the hotel, which was not far. She hung on to his big arm and crept close to him, and shivered a little. It was quite chilly. Their footsteps were very audible in the stillness; 'pit-pat, floppety-clop,' otherwise they were both silent. They were tired, yawny, sleepy, and very sad; and each was thinking (and knew the other was thinking) that a week in Paris was just enough—and how nice it would be, in just a few hours more, to hear the rooks cawing round their own quiet little English country home—where three jolly boys would soon be coming for the holidays.

And there we will leave them to their use-

ful, humdrum, happy domestic existence—than which there is no better that I know of, at their time of life—and no better time of life than theirs!

'Où peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille?'

That blessed harbour of refuge well within our reach, and having really cut our wisdom teeth at last, and learned the ropes, and left off hankering after the moon—we can do with so little down here. . . .

A little work, a little play
To keep us going—and so, good-day!

A little warmth, a little light
Of love's bestowing—and so, good-night!

A little fun, to match the sorrow
Of each day's growing—and so, good-morrow!

A little trust that when we die
We reap our sowing! And so—good-bye!

THE END

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